

ARTIST
PRESS KIT:

**ARNALDO
ROCHE
RABELL**

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

ARNALDO ROCHE

To live and die gracefully ... knowing that we have accomplished wonders in our dwells with our inherited leftovers.

THE PROCESS

For many years, with a support of paper or canvas I draw and paint like a curious child that copies with crayons a valuable coin under the paper. I place real objects, furniture and friend's bodies under the paper, to be marked, rubbed and traced with my hands. It's a case of the Saint Thomas syndrome... I must see with my hands in order to believe. By anchoring myself to my surroundings, I create two-dimensional imprints that recall the tri-dimensional nature of my subjects... a facsimile that becomes a second skin representing their existence.

We tend to intellectualize the right to recovery and we keep looking for ways to justify our actions... this is the case with these works. They are packed with good intentions but also serve as containers for some of my fears and enlighten self-awareness.



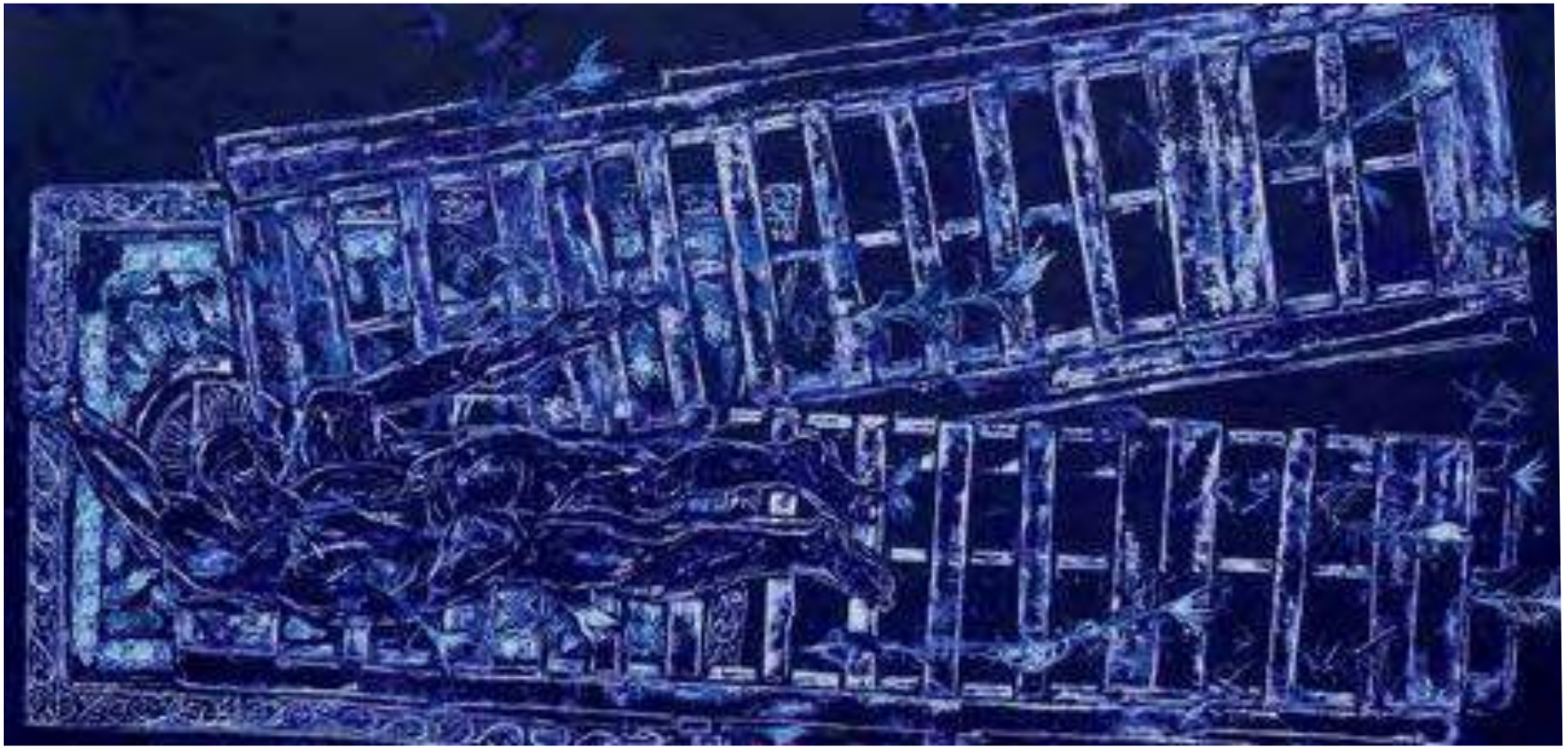


TOUCH SOMEONE

Arnaldo Roche lays hands on art BY DANIEL KUNITZ



To generate its heat, art in its making requires a measure of friction. It would seem that Arnaldo Roche, perhaps the preeminent artist of Puerto Rico since the 1980s, takes this dictum literally: He rubs his paintings into being, as one might rub a headstone or a façade. Examining his wrought canvases, one wouldn't easily guess how they were made. In a very large work from 2013, *Give Him Some Wheels and He Will Run*, a nude male figure lies prone, his muscular limbs splayed over the hood of one car and the trunk of another, with a halo surrounding his head as though he were a beatified Chris Burden, crucified on a car during a performance. Like all of Roche's paintings from the past year, this one is a monochrome midnight blue, and the images seem to be drawn or scratched into the pigment. Yet to make it, the artist draped canvas (or, for other pieces, large swaths of paper), which he



“How close can I get to you?” Arnaldo asks. “ I want to get closer...to your lies, your suspicions, your fears.”



FROM TOP:
Give Him Some Wings and
He Will Fly , 2013.
Oil on canvas, 7 x 15 ft.

The Juggler, 2012. Oil stick on
paper, 12 x 12 ft.

PREVIOUS SPREAD, FROM LEFT:
Moving On (work in progress),
2013. Oil on canvas,
84 x 84 in.

Portrait of Arnaldo Roche, 2013.

thinks of as a “second skin,” over a car and painstakingly massaged an oil stick over its contours, a process he continued with a young man to get the male figure and the leaves, scrolls, rosettes, and other ornaments—taken from furniture—that surround the automobiles. “I’m trying to see what I cannot see, by looking with my hands,” Roche explains. It’s an approach thoroughly rooted in the islands, this laying on of hands, one that, as he says, runs counter to the idea of the “privacy that is so important to the Americans.” In Puerto Rico, he continues, “we see something that we love or like and we hug, we embrace it.”

Why Roche is so keen to get past the exterior and to celebrate a sort of agape with his work has much to do with formidable difficulties, the abrasive resistance he experienced to becoming the person he is. At age 14, while Roche was drawing at the family’s kitchen table, his older brother, who suffered from schizophrenia, shot their sister to death in front of him, using their policeman father’s gun. His parents were in an abusive relationship, while his brother, whose illness was never successfully treated, ended up dying of starvation. As he got older Roche realized he is gay, and yet to complicate things further, he remains a devoted Christian, albeit a Methodist in

Catholic Latin America. So if he has been less concerned with addressing the conventional aesthetic and theoretical preoccupations of the art world, it is because his work has to do, as he puts it, with “trying to live, trying to manage pain, despair, a bunch of shit.”

That’s not to say that by painting he is groping his way toward some sort of therapy. Roche’s is a rigorously formed aesthetic. After studying architecture in Puerto Rico as a young man, he came to the States, earning a BFA and an MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. The city, he says, changed him; it disclosed to him the world of art and ideas—“a new Roche was born there.” He fell in love with Chicago’s Victorian architecture and with ornamentation, “anything that has silver or gold, that is Rococo or German.” Indeed, his work and process ought to be seen as exploring a dialectic of surface and depth.

Far from being dark or weighed down by the past, Roche is in fact an effervescent personality, tirelessly passionate, and this has in the past led him to complicate his works—“a lot,” he emphasizes, “because of the enthusiasm that I have about living and experiencing life very powerfully.” Those earlier efforts, for which he is best known, were often baroque

FROM TOP: TWO IMAGES: ARNALDO ROCHE AND WALTER OTERO CONTEMPORARY ART, SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO. OPPOSITE: FROM TOP: ARNALDO ROCHE AND WALTER OTERO CONTEMPORARY ART. PREVIOUS SPREAD, FROM LEFT: ARNALDO ROCHE AND WALTER OTERO CONTEMPORARY ART; ARNALDO ROCHE STUDIO

performances, with figures, lines, and shapes populating every inch of the canvas. He wanted to get everything in. With his more recent body of work, on view at Walter Otero Contemporary Art in San Juan, Puerto Rico, this month, he has tried, he says, "to keep the surfaces as simple as possible." Which, frankly, isn't all that simple, though the resulting compositions are less frenetic, calmer, and more centered. Still, no energy has been lost. In *Give Him Some Wings and He Will Fly*, 2013, a nude Daedalus stand-in stretches prone along tall, slatted garden trellises, which in this drama function as the titular wings. The background is as clear as the sky's dome.

The actual trellises Roche rubbed for the painting lie heaped in a corner of the studio among other home furnishings purchased at Marshall's, all of which he has painted blue. His reasons for doing so offer some insight into why the paintings hew to the same cobalt palette. His studio is like his home, Roche says, and he filled it as he would a home, but "then came this rupture," he continues, referring to his desire to simplify, "and I decided to paint everything blue. In that way, I detached myself from these things, because they were gold or looked like high art"—they were too ornamental. By painting them blue, he was "claiming the identity of things,



that everything is the same thing."

We are all one, surface and depth, the pretty and the profound. Indeed, Roche has often used furniture and people's personal items in his work. And not just used, because his process entails a rough caress, physical interaction. "How close can I get to you?" he asks of his subjects. "I want to get closer, closer to your belongings, your lies, your suspicions, your privacy. To your home, your car, your brain, your fears." In his probing,

Roche remains apart from the Warholian irony and obsession with the superficial that pervades contemporary art. "My whole thing is about finding what is underneath, what I don't see. And loving it, taking care of it," he says. There is no ironic detachment in Roche's world, no skipping along the tops of the waves; whenever he can, he plunges through the surface. Or as he puts it: "How many cans of Campbell's soup do I have to eat to understand Warhol? None!" MP

FROM TOP:
Roche at working, San Juan,
Puerto Rico.

*Give Him Some Wheels and
He Will Run*, 2013.
Oil on canvas, 7x15 ft.



100 Can't-Miss Fall Gallery Shows From Around the World

2,400 68 5 1



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by Modern Painters
 Published: December 10, 2013

SEPTEMBER

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David Anselin
 Jiali Gallery
 September 14–October 19
 Beijing

Monika Greymala
Joanne Greenbaum
 Galerie Crome
 September–November
 Berlin

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 September
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November
New York

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November 23–January 18, 2014
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Takeshi Murata
Ratio 3
November 1–December 14
San Francisco

Amikam Toren
Jessica Silverman Gallery
November
San Francisco

Arnaldo Roche Rabell
Walter Otero Gallery
November 7–January 9, 2014
San Juan, Puerto Rico



September 2013: THIS MONTH

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MIKE KELLEY at CENTRE POMPIDOU



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RECOMMENDED

Arnaldo Roche's paintings explore the inherent limits of communication, the process of making art and the confusion of living one's life in an atmosphere of uncertainty—but that's not what's most interesting about his work. After all, myriad artists have taken on those very topics to the extent that such ambiguities have become the bread and butter of postmodern discourse. What's most interesting about Arnaldo Roche's paintings is his approach. The work contains none of the cerebral snark—the postmodern art-theory shop talk—that makes so much contemporary art unapproachable, or obnoxious, or both, and neither does it shroud itself in opaque mysticism. Instead, Roche engages in a visceral and emotional search for meaning, presenting the viewer with dreamscapes barely holding together, and images full of impassioned brushstroke and arresting form. His most recent works, currently on display at the Chicago Cultural Center in a remarkable show titled "Brotherhood/Hermanidad," quite simply must be seen to be believed: Roche's techniques form intimate, expressive connections among subject, artist and work. He wraps his subject in a canvas, and paints that subject's form by feel rather than by sight, the result of which process he calls a "rubbing." As the artist himself explains it, "It's ritualistic human interaction. More than a ritual it's a process to discover myself... I'm touching bones, muscles and fingernails... How close can I get?... It's life that becomes painting; sculpture that becomes painting." Roche thereby "eliminates the distance between art and reality." (Drew Messinger Michaels)

Through June 22 at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington



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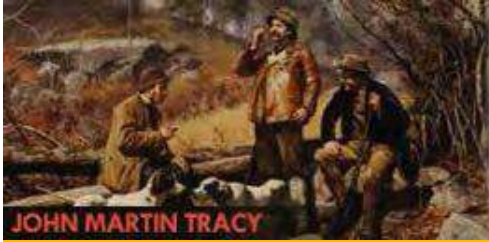
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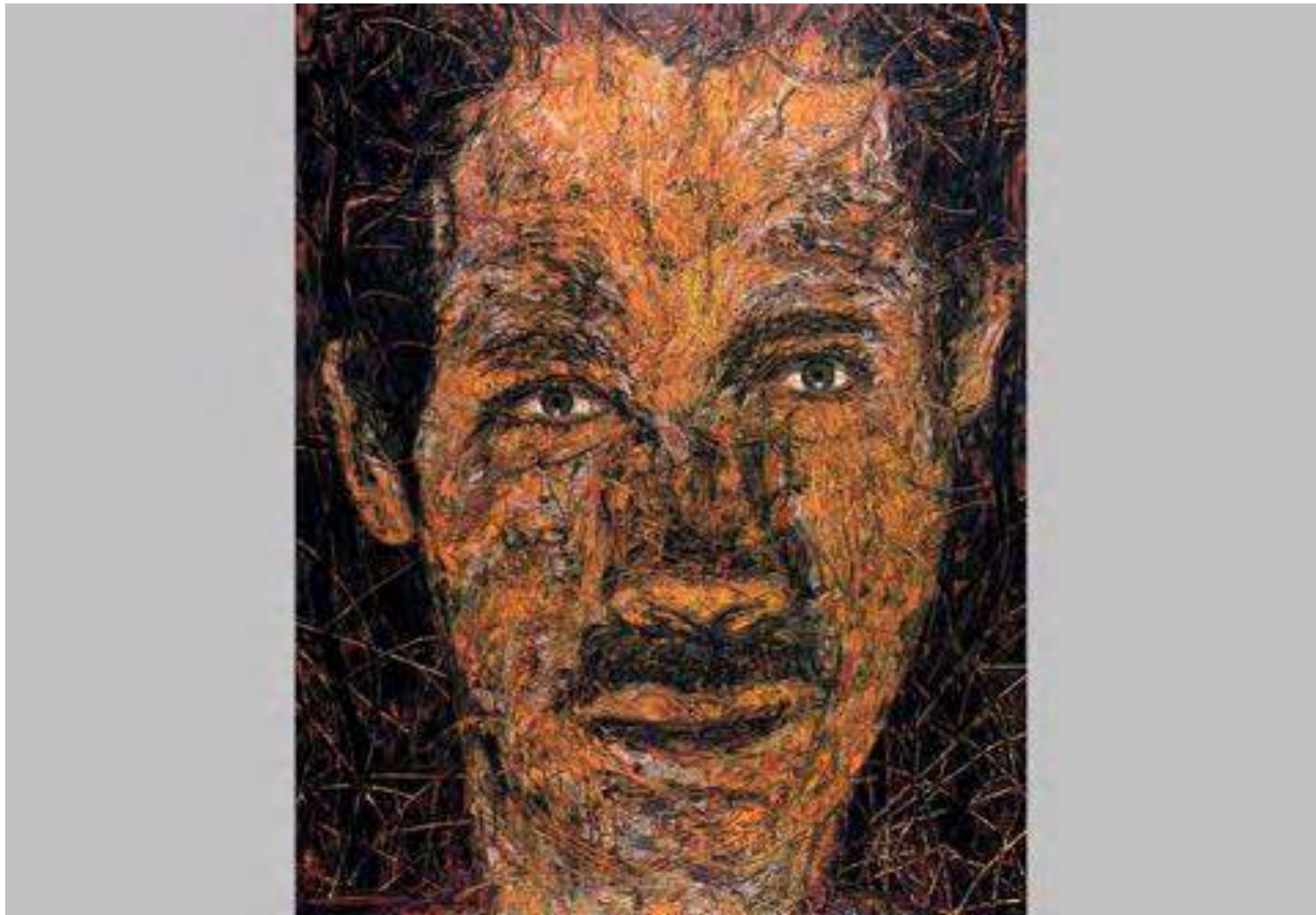
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Puerto Rico

Wednesday, October 23, 2013

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Exhibition To Explore The Power of Paint at The Phillips Collection



Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, We Have to Eat, 1986. Oil on canvas, 84 x 60 i n. Collection of Jack Kubiliun, New York. © Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, courtesy of Walter Otero Gallery, San Juan.



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▶ **WASHINGTON, DC.-** For generations, artists have used a wide range of painterly effects to suggest the physical properties and metaphorical significance of human flesh. This summer, The Phillips Collection will present *Paint Made Flesh*, a survey of figurative painting since the 1950s. Bringing together more than 40 provocative works from private collections and museums around the world, the exhibition features 33 internationally renowned contemporary artists rarely seen together, including Pablo Picasso, Francis Bacon, Georg Baselitz, Willem de Kooning, Alice Neel, Lucian Freud, Eric Fischl, and Julian Schnabel. *Paint Made Flesh* will be on view at the Phillips from June 20 to Sept. 13, 2009.

While in recent years figure painting has been pushed to the periphery of contemporary art, *Paint Made Flesh* uses some of the most celebrated examples to show how ideally suited the subject and the medium are to expressing what lies beneath the surface—the emotional, sensual, and tragic aspects of human experience. Featuring works created between 1952 and 2006 in Europe and the United States, the exhibition traces figurative painting's powerful personal and social commentary—beginning with images that convey a feeling of existential despair following World War II and

"*Paint Made Flesh* generates a fresh and fascinating conversation about the powerful legacy of figure painting," said Dorothy Kosinski, director of The Phillips Collection. "The exhibition, with its thoughtful juxtaposition of paintings, not only reveals the singular capacity of paint to capture the complexities of the human condition, but also broadens the scope of our collection's conversation with contemporary artists."

At the same time that well-known abstract painters such as Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, and Helen Frankenthaler were abandoning the representation of tangible objects, many American artists remained preoccupied with the human figure. Artists such as Alice Neel, whose unflinching paintings are among the most powerful portraits of the 20th century, distorted the anatomy of their subjects and used an unusual color palette to express themes of poverty, despair, and turmoil. Other painters, such as Willem de Kooning, who once said "flesh is the reason oil painting was invented," used vigorous brushstrokes and deliberate vulgarity to describe feelings of anguish and anxiety.

The widespread revival of figure painting in Germany and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s was often labeled neoexpressionism because it evoked the strong colors, primitive forms, and energetic brushstrokes of early-20th-century German expressionists such as Emil Nolde, Max Beckmann, and Edvard Munch. German artists Georg Baselitz and A.R. Penck, who were children during the Nazi occupation, and American artists Susan Rothenberg and Julian Schnabel, combined bold colors and crudely painted figures with imagery culled from dreams, folk art, and personal obsessions to render psychological depth.

Drawing on the English tradition of portraiture, artists such as Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon took full advantage of paint's capacity to be thick or thin, opaque or transparent, to translate the actual surface of flesh into expressions of psychological strength and vulnerability. Bacon dramatically smeared and scraped oily color to extract every nuance of feeling and tension, while Freud focused on the skin's various bumps, scabs, scars, and wrinkles to create powerful and riveting images of humanity.

The exhibition culminates with recent work by contemporary artists such as Tony Bevan, Wangeschi Mutu, Albert Oehlen, and Daniel Richter who show the body responding to a wave of social concerns, including new technology, disease, and threats of terrorism. They mix and adapt expressive styles to challenge perceptions of identity beyond nationality, ethnicity, religion, or politics—turning the human form into the embodiment of complex social values.

This section also includes portraits from the late 1990s to 2006 by Michael Borremans, Francesco Clemente, John Currin, Eric Fischl, Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, and Lisa Yuskavage. In these works, skin is blemished, wrinkled, or otherwise made imperfect as if it is a topographical map that signifies the subject's inner psychology. Fischl's *Frailty is a Moment of Self-Reflection* (1996), created by the painter while mourning his father's death, is a poignant consideration of human vulnerability. By depicting skin as if it is made of parchment, Fischl has stripped away any sense of decorum or artifice to reveal a painful truth about the eroding impact of time. In contrast, portraits by Michael Borremans, Lisa Yuskavage, and John Currin combine the likeness of their subjects with cultural stereotypes derived from art history, old movie posters, and girlie pinups. In each, skin seems to be made of plastic or covered with heavy makeup, reinforcing the artificiality of the social persona while reflecting the era of plastic surgery and digital beautification.

Paint Made Flesh was organized by the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville, Tenn. The curator is Mark W. Scala, chief curator of the Frist. After its presentation at the Phillips, the exhibition will be on view at the Memorial Art Gallery in Rochester, N.Y., from Oct. 25, 2009 to Jan. 3, 2010.



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Museum Celebrates 25th Anniversary with Arnaldo Roche Rabell Exhibition



Arnaldo Roche Rabell, "Blue."



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SAN JUAN.- This year the [Museum of Contemporary Art of Puerto Rico](#) commemorates its Twenty-fifth Anniversary.  The year-long celebration begins with an exhibition of Arnaldo Roche Rabell's (1955) recent work, entitled "Azul" (Blue). The opening is scheduled for Saturday, October 24 at 7:00pm.

Roche Rabell is a distinguished Puerto Rican artist, renowned both locally and internationally for his striking and challenging work. His paintings are characterized by their exploration of the limits of figuration and the representation of the human body, their expansion of the use of color, and their employment of a narrative art that ranges from an emblematic and direct political questioning to construction of a subjectivity centered on Roche's personal myths. The public and private have often coincided in this work, which is known for its brilliant palette, its formal daring, and its focus on the human body and an inventory of ordinary objects.

"Blue" represents a substantial shift in Roche's characteristic practices. By using, almost exclusively, a monochromatic blue palette and a pure white line, an almost sculptural "carving" of the paint on the paper or canvas, and an extremely large format, Roche has redefined his ideas about figure, ground, and story, as well as the ways he attacks and works the pictorial surface. The iconography characteristic of Roche is still here in these new images, but austere reconfigured, to charge them anew with meaning.

The new sobriety displayed by Roche in his paintings, distancing itself from the explosion of texture and color in his earlier works, may be unexpected by the many viewers familiar with his work, but this new style was latent in paintings done as early as the 1970s and 1980s. To illustrate this development, along with the recent works "Blue" will contain some of the earlier paintings that foreshadowed this new direction.

"Azul" (Blue) was curated by Lilliana Ramos-Collado, Ivette Fred-Rivera, and Marianne Ramírez-Aponte, MAC's Executive Director. Educational programming for this exhibition includes activities for children and adults led by MAC's Education staff and guest lecturers from the University of Puerto Rico and the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico. The exhibition will be open through December 20, 2009.

Museum of Contemporary Art of Puerto Rico | Arnaldo Roche Rabell | | Blue | Lilliana Ramos-Collado | Ivette Fred-Rivera | Marianne Ramírez-Aponte | 

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Defining Caribbean Crossroads of the World

Sep 20, 2012

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By Bansie Vasvani

Caribbean: Crossroads of the World, an expansive, multi-venue exhibition in New York at The Studio Museum in Harlem, the El Museo del Barrio, and the Queens Museum, dislodges the common perception of art from this region as derivative, inauthentic, and peripheral. This comprehensive representation of 500 works by 250 artists not only encompasses a vast geographical territory, but it also reveals the impact of African, Asian, European, and indigenous elements that prevailed through the years.

Dating from the Haitian Revolution of 1791 and extending to the present, the works selected by a team of nine scholars and curators—Gerald Alexis, Rocio Aranda-Alvarado, Deborah Cullen, Hitomi Iwasaki, Naima J. Keith, Yolanda Wood Pujols, Lowery Stokes Sims, and Edward J. Sullivan, led by Elvis Fuentes, curator for special projects at El Museo del Barrio—examine a broad range of themes in their strident effort to formulate an identity of their own. Drawing on fundamental aspects of Caribbean life including labor, race, segregation, African folklore, mythology, and spirituality, these artists forge a language of authenticity culled from an amalgamation of varied influences and experiences. The most compelling aspect of the show is its privileging the local historical context as a point of reference.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the notion of identity became increasingly important in the newly decolonized regions of the Caribbean. At The Studio Museum in Harlem, the works organized under the subtitle “Shades of History” explore how artists portrayed the significance of race in their respective social and historical cultures. In Jamaican native Mallica Kapo Reynold’s *Seven Brothers* (1966), a carved wooden sculpture of seven African faces, the incorporation of African heritage crept into a traditional Western form of carving as an expression of native selfhood and national identity. Similarly, a 2009 sculpture by Jamaican/New York artist Elia Alba probes the legacy of cultural hybridity in her ongoing investigation of the construction of identity. In *Bust (Simone)* Alba transfers a photographic portrait onto fabric that is draped around a metal frame to give her two-dimensional image a three-dimensional perspective. Placed on a pedestal in emulation of classical art, her playful yet emotionally charged bust stares unnervingly at the viewer. These modes of expression outgrow their original sources to create a unique language that gains additional traction and pertinence when seen against the historical context in which it is created. Such interplay happens throughout the exhibition.

Colombian artist Olga de Amaral’s glass encased gold tapestry at the El Museo del Barrio uses woven linen with gesso and earth toned pigments to create an architectural façade that, she says, “resembles a golden surface of light.” While representing her personal aesthetic, this work is also steeped in the vast realm of Colombian tradition including landscape with its native architecture, pre-Colombian textiles, Indian basketry, and gold ornamentation. Referring to indigenous traditions and the use of organic materials, Amaral’s art shows the influence of the West while retaining an original ethnic tradition still embraced by the larger segment of society. What results is a new form of modernity, one minus the history of the Western avant-garde. The new form repudiates colonial feudalism as the art becomes an expression of the people.

Also at Museo del Barrio, in the “Patriots Acts” section, Arnaldo Roche-Rabell’s painting, *We Have to Dream in Blue* (1986), combines both Western and indigenous traditions to represent his Puerto Rican identity. This portrait shows the artist’s labor-intensive process of rubbing an object onto his canvas that is already layered with several coats of paint. Roche-Rabell’s intention is to “create a skin,” or establish a palpable rapport with his environment. In the painting, the rich composition of native leaves and husk that make up the male sitter’s face and hair are juxtaposed against his deep blue eyes emphasizing the complex nature of Roche-Rabell’s and Puerto Rico’s relationship with the US. Rather than draw or copy his subjects, he leaves direct marks. Although critics have made a connection between Roche-Rabell and Wifredo Lam who considered painting an “art of decolonization,” Roche-Rabell’s vision is more in keeping with the spiritual side of his local culture.



Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, *We Have to Dream in Blue*, 1986. Courtesy of El Museo del Barrio.

Mark making is also clear in the revival of rituals where the body becomes the site for religious expression. In the section “Kingdoms of this World” at the Queens Museum, artists take on African religious practices that were integrated with the indigenous celebrations as well as the sanctioned Catholic rituals mandated by the colonizers. Carnivals fostered performance, costume design, and masquerade as a way to hide and transmogrify the self. Hector Mendez Caratini’s *Berto* (2001) is a tribute to the Puerto Rican papier-mâché pioneer, Alberto Gonzalez. The video features a procession of dancers, musicians, and participants in elaborate costumes and masks who entertain thousands of viewers. By enacting religious rituals and folkloric traditions the carnivals came to use transformation and camouflage as a metaphor for survival and resistance. In this way art becomes an expression of self-identity that is potentially restorative and necessary for the creation of a new, more inclusive society. Through the works shown at the Queens Museum new registers of looking and evaluation are set into motion. Viewers are asked to take into account the specific context and circumstance in which objects are made, thereby facilitating the interpretation of art as a multilayered process that embraces these qualities and characteristics.

Making visible what has long been considered invisible or inconsequential is often the impulse of many Caribbean artists. Symbols and images from voodoo rituals appear throughout all three shows. They demonstrate a commitment to making this cultural practice not only an object of study but also as an important source of inspiration. The Queens Museum emphasizes this tendency in the work of Gabriel Bien-Aimé, one of Haiti’s leading metal sculptors. In the voodoo belief system Iwa, or the spirit, is closely linked with nature and believed to inhabit springs, rivers, and trees. It can appear in a variety of avatars including non-human forms. In Bien-Aimé’s *Mermaid*, an undated forged iron sculpture, the titular figure is surrounded by vines that spring from her body. The spirit appears with a human face with her tail entwined in nature. These images legitimize a belief system that has often been considered barbaric. Visual discourses in the Caribbean navigate between non-conformist territories like this, moving from resistance to a search to legitimize practice, traveling from the center to the periphery and vice-versa.



Gabriel Bien-Aimé, *Mermaid*. Courtesy of El Museo del Barrio

VOLUME VI, NUMBER 1, SPRING 2010 . AMERICAS

"THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY IN THE ART OF ANA MENDIETA AND ARNALDO ROCHE-RABELL" BY JUDIT GERA

Judit Gera holds MA degrees in English and Hispanic Studies from the University of Szeged. Email: gerajudit@yahoo.com

A term obsessively repeated in Latin America, especially in Puerto Rico, is 'identity'. The search for identity is, fundamentally, the wish that our actions and words seem and sound truthful. [...] In art, we want our forms to give pleasure, to be real, original, and distinct from those of other cultures.

Marta Traba

There is no original past to redeem; there is the void, the orphanhood, [...] There is above all the search for origin.

Ana Mendieta

What if we make the canvas a lung through which we can breathe? A place where the memory can cure beyond the devotional and commemorative images.

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell

I. INTRODUCTION

Apart from recent tendencies of globalization, a phenomenon that is transforming our world to a radical extent is that more and more space is given to the cult of difference and otherness. Together with the impact of progress towards the global attitude, local elements are also moving to the foreground, which, at certain moments may appear as means to fight any occurrence of devastating dominance. At the same time, due to many changes in our perception of reality (including space and time) the local needs redefinition. The local does not any more have its roots in well-defined territories, essential truths or universal values. Instead, today it carries the possibility of constant change due to its process-like nature, linguistic mediation and subjectivity.

To demonstrate the complexity of our perception, let us suppose we have to give the definition of the common name "island." If we think of Puerto Rico or Cuba, for instance, we can say that they are pieces of land surrounded by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Yet, the two places play an important role in this study precisely because, in this case, political, social and cultural factors hinder the acceptability of such an essentialist definition. In the case of Puerto Rico, the concept of 'local' is not entirely valid. The place politically belongs to the United States of America and has a great number of people who declare themselves Puerto Ricans by nationality but live on the mainland. The population of the Puerto Rican diaspora maintains the island's cultural traditions with the same intensity as islanders do.

interpretation. Here, and in his other portraits where a similar motif appears (*Asabache*, 1986), the United States is symbolized by intensive, Caucasian blue eyes. With these visual tools, the artist expresses the complexities of an unstable, double identification process.



FIGURE 1 © Arnaldo Roche-Rabell: *You Have to Dream in Blue*
(<http://www.uprm.edu/news/media/articles/as2009028B2.jpg>)

Another Roche-Rabell painting focusing on national identity is entitled *The False Prophet* (1996), where the issue of doubling plays an even more important role than in the above-mentioned one. The painting shows an extremely fine fusion of two faces in one; only the eyes are different, they are blue and brown. Yet, only one mouth belongs to the eyes, which seems to be a metaphor of the island represented by a star taken from the Puerto Rican flag. The different eye colors imply here a difference in points of view concerning Puerto Rico's destiny. The false prophet, as the title suggests, is an individual who preaches about his homeland from a mixture of perspectives that includes that of North Americans, as well. An aggressively intense blue look is contrasted with a more subtle brown one; this contrast represents all inherent difficulties of making decisions about the political status of the island, since this situation cannot be solved for the satisfaction of the whole



ALL ARTISTS (3411)

ARNALDO RABELL



BIO

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell was born in Puerto Rico in 1955. Roche-Rabell earned a bachelor of fine arts degree and a master of fine arts degree from the Art Institute in Chicago. Earlier, he studies architecture in Puerto Rico before deciding to devote his studies to painting. Much of Roche-Rabell's work shows images of himself, either as a victim or a victor. When using m...

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Arnaldo Rabell, *Literally Nonbeliever*, 2007, Oil on gessoed paper, Courtesy of the artist, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Walter Otero Gallery, San Juan, Puerto Rico.



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ARNALDO ROCHE-RABELL and His Models

by Michèle Dalmace

Arnaldo Roche Rabell often resorts to several types of models: models considered to define trends and/or essences –internal, Caribbean, European– that establish an intercultural dialogue. On the other hand, he updates the concept of “model” as figure and shares this model’s intimacy in a radically different way.

The Puerto Rican Masters

The first filiation deliberately acknowledged by Roche corresponds to the masters who have developed their oeuvre throughout the 19th and during the early 20th century – José Campeche, Francisco Oller, Ramón Frade – as proved by his painting Campeche, Oller y Roche (2000). El reino de Pantaleón and La dama se baja del caballo, although making clear reference to Campeche, are endowed with a strong dose of humor, black humor in the case of the former, more of a complicit humor shared with the viewer in the case of the latter, as if inviting him or her to forget about both the conventions governing the behavior of a well-bred lady and the rules governing painting, in order to envisage these ruptures through a new gaze.

On several occasions, Roche quotes Francisco Oller y Cestero, symbolizing the building of an awareness with respect to Puerto Rican culture.

Intimacy with Van Gogh

Roche establishes a communion with Van Gogh, to whom he is linked by a visual experience, by some painful personal experiences, and by a technique based on a thick impasto and a gamut of vibrant colors. Each of them has expressed his difficulty to harmonize a rendition that, due to its clash with the risky nature of life, goes beyond the representation of life or of the object.

On re-composing into a continuum three drawings of the Saint-Paul- de-Mausole asylum executed by Van Gogh, Roche renders moments and places as well as states of the soul. It is a spatial continuum, the one of the asylum, and it is therefore mental, but it is also temporal, since it introduces a spatial lag, that of the door halfway between an external reality and a self-absorbed world. Roche proposes an itinerary that is almost an initiation, handing certain keys to the spectator, but leaving him unprepared to face the final enigma. The monumental scale leads the viewer into this universe which, through the spontaneous vitality of the brushstroke, makes it possible to understand the urgency shared by both artists. The asylum – like the self-portrait – becomes an anchor on which Rabell deposits feelings, convictions, fears, and which creates a link between the unconscious and the real world. Some pairs of objects start to make up the subject and its double: an easel, some flowers, a chair, a bed, which multiply and superimpose connotations, contexts, and time periods.

Lam’s Imprint Another filiation, a subterranean one, or rather, a sub-archipelago and constant one, allows Roche to identify his work not only with the Puerto Rican essence but also with the Caribbean one. The world of Wifredo Lam, especially the one developed after The Jungle (1943-44), underlies Arnaldo’s universe. Roche Rabell’s oeuvre shares with Lam its formal aspect, adopting a baroque quality in accordance with the model, while at the same time the relationship with nature rejects tropical exoticism, inquiring into the spiritual narrative. It is also based on the legacy of Lam, who considered that painting was “an act of

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Arnaldo Roche-Rabell3

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de-colonization.” This concept has had significant repercussions on the work of artists. The incorporation of the subordinate Afro-Caribbean culture has been a trigger, mainly for artists from the 1980s and 1990s.

Roche’s Splendid Dramatization

Reflection and the confrontation of cultural symbols have been accompanied by a relevant practice in his production. He has chosen a strong relationship with his model(s), very different from the one conveyed by *The Painter and His Model*, so recurring in “Western” art, and in particular, in Picasso.

Roche modifies the way of grasping the significance of the model. He does not do so through the gaze of a demiurge; the medium resides, rather, in the tactile and in ductility. On the other hand, “the model” does not act like a muse, or like a nude; he/she does not convey beauty, or aestheticism, or gracefulness.

The chosen model may be a man or a woman’s body, a face, but it may also be any object whatsoever: a chair, a bed, or even a car. Besides, most often this representation of the object appears as the receptacle of the human trace, of a blurred silhouette, scarcely outlined, with a spectral look.

This procedure is totally in tune with the world of confinement that the Puerto Rican artist proposes to the viewer. It consists of two phases: a molding process to cover the subject, and a phase of working on the canvas spread out on the ground. Almost transformed into a “sculptor” without vindicating this role, Roche gradually molds the model, confronting his/her physicality, bringing to the surface or removing the volumes in an act of strength, highlighting an attitude, scratching a detail, a line. In this first stage he is more interested in what the first impasto stroke suggests than in aesthetics or the purity of the line. Later he will resort to “grattage” (scratching), which requires so much energy, to produce translucent signs, traces. When a face can be glimpsed, the spectator immediately associates it to a shroud connoting suffering and death, and even more, to a religious icon, due to the title – *Blessing America*— and the symbolic aura. The reiteration of the portrait, a constant in his whole oeuvre, is transformed in this last series into an accumulation that is not altogether repetitive, since each of them unveils a different facet of the pain it expresses.

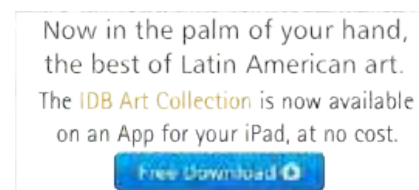
Quick scratches, maculated traces bring out that which is hidden and internal, and gradually unveil it, with the complicity of work resorting to different textures based on vegetal elements.

Roche has progressively displayed an organic poetics throughout his oeuvre. He invites the viewer to penetrate the greatness of a tree through the trace of a small twig or the majesty of nature through the vegetal fan he features in one of his works. His approach to typically Caribbean vegetation is similar to Lam’s. He does not offer an exotic vision; rather, he proposes a more profound dimension, suggesting that underneath the surface lies a spiritual and sensual world. The act of smearing some branches with pure colors later to remove them from the canvas in order to leave some light, many- nuanced traces constitutes a challenge halfway between an act of violence and one of delicacy. It can also interweave them with great subtlety. In both cases, a beat emerges, rhythms appear.

Emotion and sensuality lead Roche to entwine fragility with strength, suffering with a new aesthetics of nature. The artist appropriates sumptuous colors such as yellow and blue, before distributing some darker tones that endow prosaic objects – a car – with substance. On the one hand, they may contribute to make everything dense: the light, the shadows, space, the atmosphere. On the other hand, they stress the deformity of the bodies that the brushstroke has highlighted at the same time it emphasized nature’s aesthetic quality. Numerous elements enter into a state of symbiosis: correspondences between the plasticity and the flexibility of the supports; assemblages of supports, of techniques, of subject matter; paradoxes that dissolve. What he shows is not really what constitutes the core of his painting; its essence resides, rather, in the fragile, and in the capacity of this fragility to renew itself, or, to employ an oxymoron, as the artist does, in the strength of this fragility.

Profile:

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico in 1955. After pursuing studies of Architecture, Design and Illustration, he obtained his MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1984. He has been the recipient of prestigious distinctions, among them, the Visual Arts





Magnificent Murals at the St. Regis

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Magnificent Murals

Painter Maxfield Parrish's "Old King Cole" mural marked the beginning of one of the St. Regis' most beloved traditions.

By Sarah Pierce



St. Regis has a rich heritage full of time-honored traditions, some dating back more than a century. Perhaps the most celebrated of these is placing a stunning mural at the centerpiece of The

sophistication and status—also pillars of St. Regis. The mural “War” depicts the enduring strength and beauty of the world as it progresses in time from the past to the future.

The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort

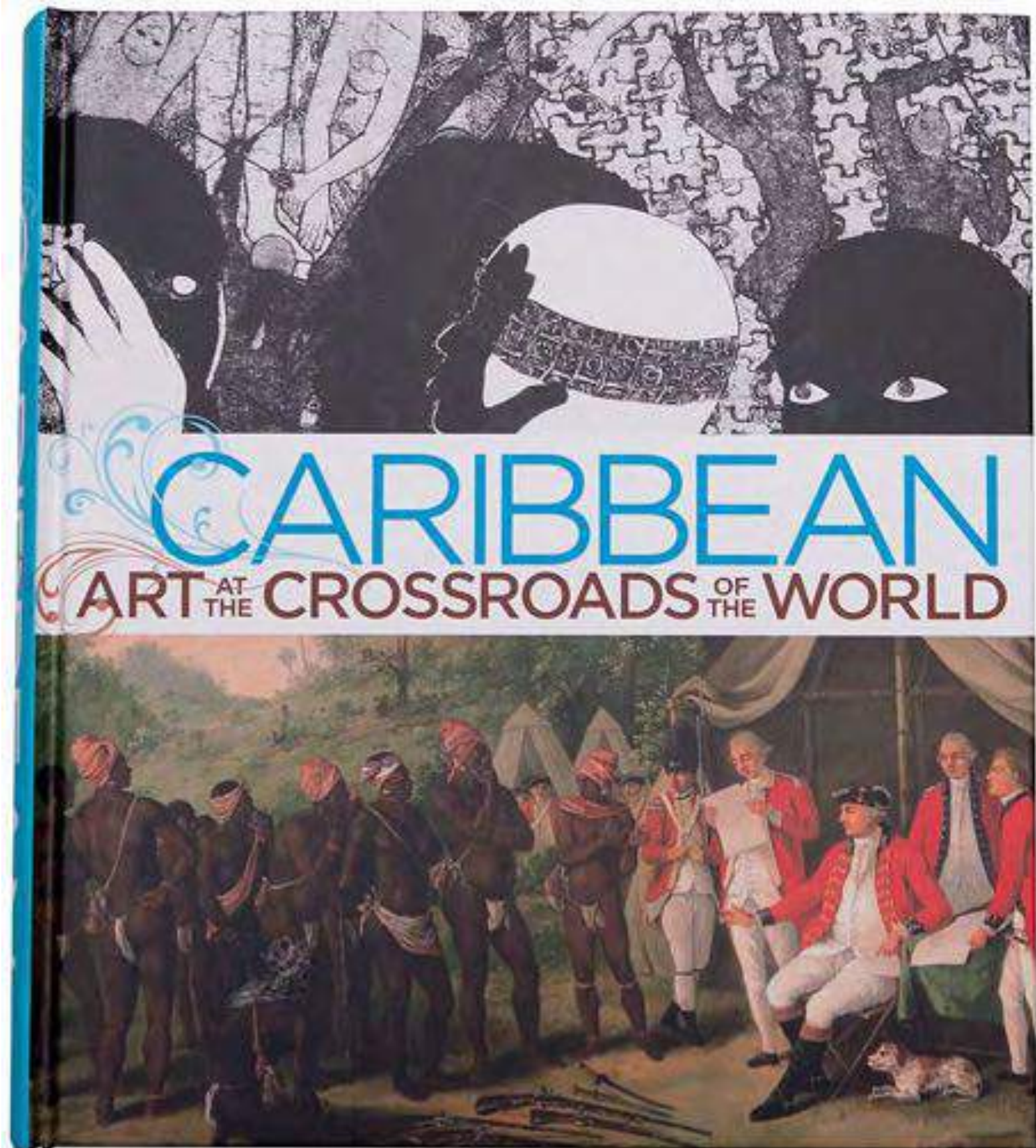
“The Long Awaited Voyage” (2010) by Arnaldo Roche Rabell

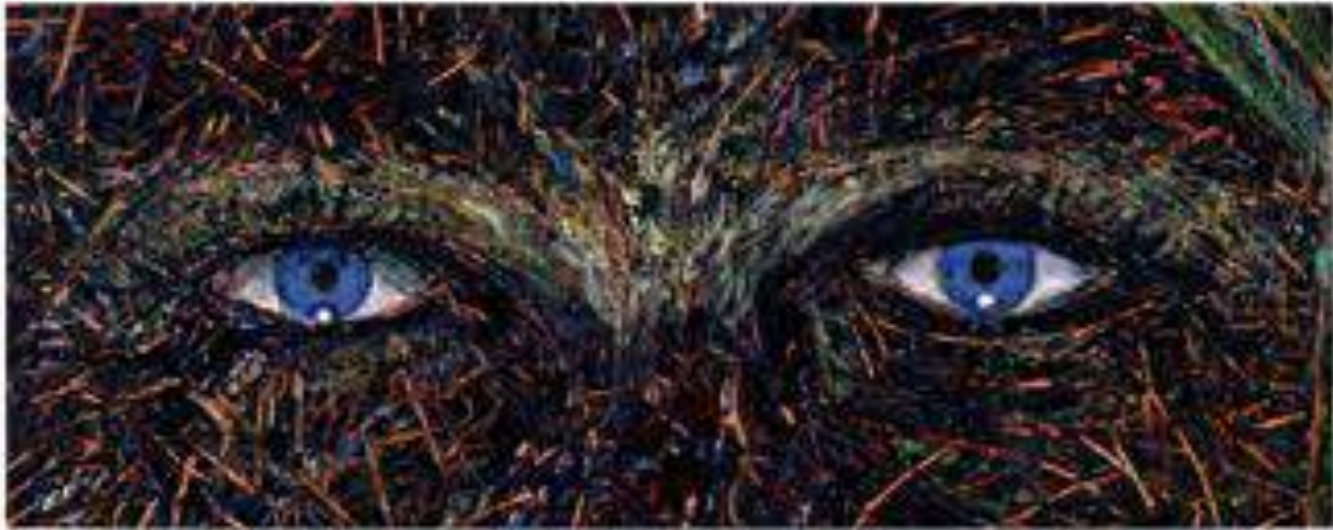


Puerto Rican-born artist Arnaldo Roche Rabell was invited to The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort to draw inspiration from the resort’s lush scenery for the 7-by-16-foot bar mural, “The Long Awaited Voyage.” The principal character in the piece is blindfolded to understand the power of nature, and symbolizes an ambiguous journey inside and out. Roche Rabell, who also studied in Chicago, is internationally renowned for his contribution to the plastic arts, which involves manipulating a plastic medium to create three-dimensional art. Roche Rabell created his own unique stylistic vocabulary in this category, in which he applies layers of bright colors to canvas with models underneath (creating the bas-relief), covering the bright layers in black and then rubbing off the black with a palette to produce dramatic and revealing images. Usually large in format, exuberant in color and dramatic in content, his pictorial expressionism feeds from a variety of personal and historic matters. His work often involves layers of images—a symbolic nod to having multiple layers of identity as both a Puerto Rican and American.

The St. Regis Princeville Resort

“Firebrands of Makana” (2008) by Douglas





The exhibition *Caribbean Crossroads of the World* is the culmination of nearly a decade of collaborative research and scholarship organized by El Museo del Barrio in conjunction with the Queens Museum of Art and The Studio Museum in Harlem. Featuring work at the three museums and accompanied by an ambitious range of programs and events, *Caribbean Crossroads* offers an unprecedented opportunity to explore the diverse and impactful cultural history of the Caribbean basin and its diaspora. More than 500 works of art spanning four centuries illustrate changing aesthetics and ideologies and provide meaningful conversations about topics ranging from commerce and cultural hybridity to politics and pop culture. [Read more](#)

EXHIBITION DATES

El Museo del Barrio
June 17, 2012 - January 6, 2013

Queens Museum of Art
June 17, 2012 - January 6, 2013

The Studio Museum in Harlem
June 14, 2012 - October 21, 2012



The Exhibition



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IN THE GALLERIES

Arnaldo Roche exhibit at Chicago Cultural Center

May 23, 2008 | By Alan Artner

Arnaldo Roche showed paintings at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center in the heyday of Neo Expressionism more than 20 years ago. Now he is back at the Chicago Cultural Center with recent works larger and more open about their links to the expressionism of Vincent van Gogh than ever, and it is a happy return for the native of Puerto Rico who once made his home here.

The works take in Van Gogh, the childhood death of Roche's brother, 9/11 and the 2004 Asian tsunami. Not all of the influences are equally clear. However, quotations from Van Gogh paintings and drawings are fully assimilated into Roche's overpowering style, which is based in the technique of frottage or rubbing.

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Always large, the paintings are now truly monumental, and some on view have the technique but not the pictorial incident to sustain interest at that size. Still, as it was in the '80s, this has remained distinctive, personal work that succeeds in stimulating viewers without recourse to either popular culture or a "conceptual" program.

Chicago Tribune

NEWS

At 78 E. Washington St. 312-744-6630.

Last month the International Sculpture Center in San Francisco gave Fletcher Benton a lifetime achievement award, and now, in Chicago, the 77-year-old master of outdoor work receives a strong small show of maquettes, prints, tabletop and wall pieces at the Jean Albano Gallery.

Some of the pieces are homages to Wassily Kandinsky and particularly his later, hard-edged geometric abstractions. This suggests the tradition with which Benton identifies, but it is not the full story. Benton's major contributions have been free-standing pieces with the economy of folded-paper cutouts and a series of works that defy gravity even as it celebrates inherent qualities of steel and bronze. Both are represented here.

Less well-known are the wall pieces called "Steel Paintings" in which some of Benton's three-dimensional components are brought together, again sometimes precariously, with incised geometric painted forms. These, too, are persuasive, though much more sober than the selections from "The Steel Watercolor Series," a series of multiples that substantially lightens through balance alone a persisting modern current.

At 215 W. Superior St. 312-440-0770.

Brian Ulrich's show of a series of photographs on thrift stores in December 2006, suggested that his continuing protest of American consumerism perhaps needed to go upscale, into the auction houses and galleries dedicated to our culture of money. Now, Ulrich and Jason Lazarus exhibit works in the City Gallery at the Historic Water Tower that were in fact taken at the Wright auction house in Chicago, but they serve neither the art pictured nor the cause of making anyone more aware of the empty cycle of acquisition.

When, say, Walker Evans and Charles Sheeler were commissioned to shoot art objects, the works received such superfine treatment that the photo images could stand in for a first-hand viewing experience. Here, however, the Wright commission, which was said to give the photographers full access to the facilities, has been fulfilled by Lazarus undercutting the art when he pictures it at all and Ulrich drawing away from the social commentary that is his motivation and forte.

Lazarus addresses only indirectly works by Ad Reinhardt, Ed Ruscha, Sol LeWitt, Jenny Holzer, Donald Judd and Jasper Johns. The single piece shot head on is Philippe Halsman's photograph of Marilyn Monroe as Mao Tse Tung -- and its treatment is too stupid for words. Ulrich begins more promisingly in Wright's backroom and studio -- an image of pairs of sconces and chairs is chilling -- but is diverted into coy portraits inspired by paintings and extreme closeups of upholstery.

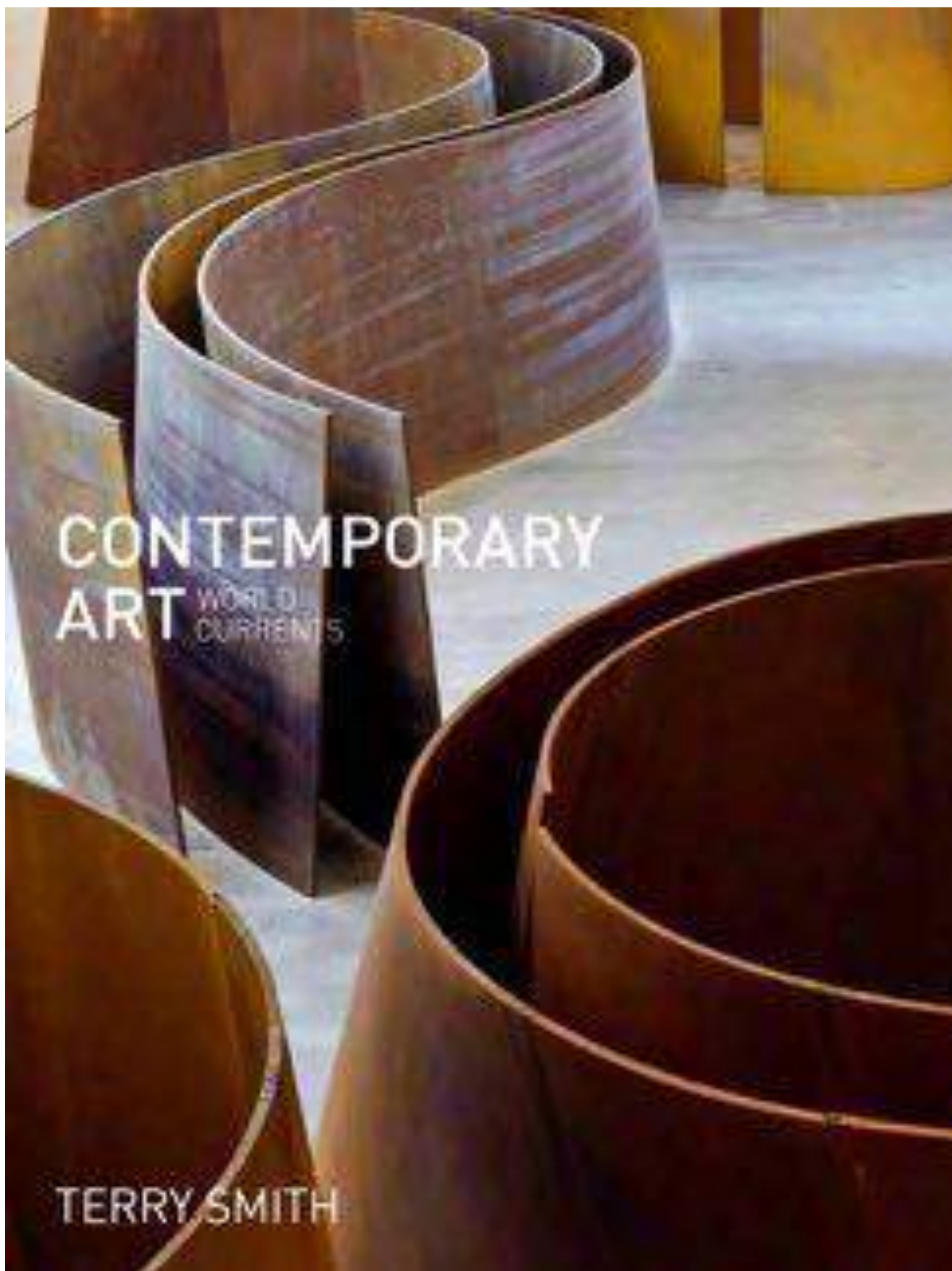
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At the height of the modern movement, it often was said that subject matter in painting counted for little. Of course, no one asked viewers, who always are attracted to some subjects and not others, depending on personal makeup. But in those years such was the pressure to "go beyond" subject matter that even fairly sophisticated viewers would pretend not to notice, as when a gay collector in Chicago feigned surprise to an interviewer who remarked that the only nudes he owned were of males.

Nowadays, things are different. More than 20 years of emphasis on sexual, racial and political themes have



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Los Angeles Times

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Patti Heid Tries to Make Sense of the Media and the World

September 09, 1996 SHAUNA SNOW



In his talk, which prompted even a couple of festival organizers to snicker that the oil magnate "brought the wrong speech," Hammer also mentioned that visitors would have to "pay a nominal fee" to be so enriched.

CURRENTS

The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, N.C., has announced the winners of its 10th annual Awards in the Visual Arts. The AVA program, which awards each emerging artist \$15,000 and mounts a nationally touring exhibition of their work, was embroiled in controversy two years ago when one of its recipients, Andres Serrano, drew fire from conservatives and Christian fundamentalist groups for his work "Piss Christ."



AVA winners were chosen from 500 candidates across the country to each represent one U.S. geographical district. Painter James Hayward of Moorpark was selected to represent Southern California and Hawaii.

Other recipients are conceptual sculptor Tony Labat of San Francisco; painters Carlos Alfonzo of Miami, **Arnaldo Roche-Rabell** of Chicago and Kay Rosen of Gary, Ind.; sculptors Petah Coyne of Manhattan and Steve Barry of Corrales, N.M., and mixed-media artists Adrian Piper of Washington, Cary Leibowitz of Boston and Jessica Stockholder of Brooklyn.

The "AVA 10" exhibition is scheduled to premiere in 1991 at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington (June 12-Sept. 2), then travel to the Albuquerque Museum of Art, History and Science (Sept. 14-Dec. 1) and the Toledo Museum of Art (Dec. 15-Jan. 26, 1992).

Los Angeles-based visual artists and organizations can apply for \$150,000 in grants and fellowships through the California Community Foundation's J. Paul Getty Trust Fund for the Visual Arts.

Fellowships of \$15,000 each will be awarded to five midcareer individual artists, and grants ranging from \$5,000-\$15,000 will be given to non-profit groups with budgets under \$1.5 million.

The application deadline is Oct. 15 and the grants will be announced in January, 1991. Information: (213) 413-4042.

HAPPENING

Bill Turner of Turner/Dailey Gallery will speak on negotiating artist/gallery contracts on Wednesday at a workshop at the law firm of Gold, Marks, Ring and Pepper, 1800 Avenue of the Stars, Century City. Cost for the 7 p.m. event, sponsored by California Lawyers for the Arts, is \$15. Information: (213) 623-8311.

The Armory Center for the Arts is holding its annual street festival on Saturday from 1-4 p.m. Festivities for the free event include exhibition tours, art workshops for children and outdoor displays by local artisans. Information: (818) 792-5101.

Otis/Parsons Art Institute on Tuesday begins a five-session course, "Grant Writing/Public Funding," designed to help individual artists receive public grants. The \$105 course meets Tuesdays through Oct. 9, from 7-10 p.m. Information: (213) 251-0501.

A self-guided tour of more than 50 artist studios and exhibition spaces in the Greater Highland Park/Eagle Rock/Mount Washington area will be held today from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Information sheets and maps will be provided for \$5 at Occidental College's Weingart Center in Eagle Rock. Information: (213) 259-2749.

Three two-hour, free walking tours of public art in downtown Los Angeles are being led today, Saturday and next Sunday by Urban Art Inc. All tours begin at 10 a.m. Information: (213) 624-2400.



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1 of 127 results for Arnaldo Roche >



Fullscreen

You Know I Am Aware Arnaldo Roche Rabell (American (born Puerto Rico), San Juan 1955)

Date: 1990
 Medium: Oil on canvas
 Dimensions: H. 83-3/4, W. 59-3/4 inches (212.7 x 151.8 cm.)
 Classification: Paintings
 Credit Line: Edith C. Blum Fund, 1990
 Accession Number: 1990.252

This artwork is not on display

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- **United States** (80,390)

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"Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Obras Recientes" "Arnaldo Roche Rabell. Recent Works"

Exhibiciones anteriores:

13 de junio a 23 de julio
(Date: June 13) de 2006

Lugar: Sala Museo
(Place: The Museum)

Por Arnaldo Roche-Rabell

"¿Qué si hacemos del lienzo un pulmón a través del cual podemos respirar? Un lugar donde la memoria pueda curar más allá de las imágenes conmemorativas y devocionales. Un lugar donde una lágrima se paga con una lágrima y cada pena con pena. El trabajo que he hecho en años recientes es acerca de esto. Para comenzar, propongo mi propia historia. No para sanar mi dolor, sino para entender la "pintura como un mecanismo" que me hará flotar por encima de mimi propio naufragio."

"What if we make the canvas a lung through which we can breathe? A place where the memory can cure beyond the devotional and commemorative images. A place where a tear is paid with a tear and each grief with a grief. The work that I have done in recent years is about this. To begin, I propose my own history. Not to heal my pain, but to understand the "painting as a mechanism" that will cause me to float above my own shipwreck."

Arnaldo Roche Rabell
Por Lino von Saenger

La búsqueda de la identidad es un tema recurrente y central en la obra de Arnaldo Roche Rabell, una de las principales figuras de la plástica caribeña y de la vanguardia artística en Latinoamérica. Este artista puertorriqueño ha moldeado el tema de la insularidad, de la ambivalencia histórica, cultural y política de su país natal, retomando elementos de la tradición pictórica europea, para crear una simbología nacional que descifre y que traduzca su mestizaje.

The search of the identity is a recurrent theme and is the central idea in the work of Arnaldo Roche Rabell, one of the main figures of the Caribbean sculpting and artistic vanguard in Latin America. This Puerto Rican artist has molded the theme of insularity, cultural, historic ambivalence, and politics of his native land; taking up again elements of the European pictorial tradition, to create a national symbol that deciphers and translates its crossbreeding.



“¿Luego del Tsunami, donde está tu Dios?”

óleo/papel, 243.84 x 609.60 cms, 2005

Los trabajos de Roche Rabell, producidos en gran formato con texturas densas y técnicas mixtas, han creado un repertorio de la exhuberancia sensorial del Caribe, con una profusión tropical de helechos, de frutas, de figuras maternas, y con elementos de la cosmología católica y de rituales mágicos africanos, imbricados en un barroquismo expresionista. Con una simbiosis de temáticas vueltas visibles, el artista articula las dificultades y ha armonizado la expresión autóctona de una isla con una historia y un estatus tan particular como el de Puerto Rico.

The works of Roche Rabell were produced in grand form with dense textures and mixed techniques. These textures and techniques have created a Caribbean repertoire of sensory exuberance, with a tropical profusion of ferns, fruits, maternal figures, and elements of catholic cosmology while overlapping with African magical rituals in an ornate and expressionistic effect. With a symbiosis of thematic visible feedback, the artist articulates the difficulties that have harmonized the indigenous expression of an island with a history and a status as private as that of Puerto Rico.

La exposición Fraternos, que presenta el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá, en junio de 2006, incluye una serie de obras de Arnaldo Roche Rabell que giran en torno a otro artista, Vincent Van Gogh. Aquí, la noción de búsqueda colectiva -la de la nación puertorriqueña-, que aborda su obra anterior, se afina, volviéndose más universal y personal, al establecer una hermandad con una de las figuras con más peso en la historia del arte, la del pintor holandés.

The Brotherly exposition that was presented in the Museum of Contemporary Art of Panama in June of 2006 included a series of works from Arnaldo Roche Rabell that revolve around the works of another artist, Vincent Van Gogh. Here, the notion of collective findings, from that of the Puerto Rican nation, is one that undertakes his previous work in relation to itself, which turned more universal and personal, in order to establish a brotherhood with one of the Dutch Painters while concentrating on art history.

El mapa narrativo de esta hermandad creada en esta serie de trabajos a partir de referencias claras y fácilmente descifrables, retoma el periodo provenzal de Arles y de Saint Remy de Provence, la época de los girasoles, de los autorretratos, del sembrador, de la habitación en el hospital psiquiátrico de Saint Paul en donde voluntariamente se internó Van Gogh. El artista puertorriqueño no busca equipararse con su homólogo holandés, y el título mismo de la exposición Fraternos, trasciende la comparación estableciendo diversos tipos de hermandades: el de la historia personal de Arnaldo Roche Rabell marcada fuertemente por la locura; el de la obra artística renovada por el producto físico de su trabajo; y finalmente la hermandad con el espectador, utilizando desbordamientos estilísticos que afinen su percepción.

The descriptive map, of the brotherhood, created in these series of works; leave legible and clear references that, once again, take up the Provençal period of Arles and Saint Remy from Provence, which included the epoch of the sunflowers, the self-portraits, the sower, and the room in the Saint Paul psychiatric hospital where Van Gogh went voluntarily. The Puerto Rican artist does not seek to be compared with its Dutch counterpart, and the same title of the Brotherly exposition, transcends the diverse comparisons establishing the types of brotherhoods: that of the personal history of Arnaldo Roche Rabell, marked hardly by the insanity; that of the artistic work renewed by the physical product of his work; and finally the brotherhood with those view the art, utilizing stylistic overflows that enhance perception.

“Estas son las cosas que pintan los que no pueden tener hijos”

óleo/lienzo 182.88 x 182.88 cms, 2004

"Those that cannot have children, this is what they paint"

THE BIG PITCHER

20 YEARS OF THE ABSTRACTED-FIGURE IN CHICAGO ART:



THE BIG PITCHER

20 Years of the Abstracted Figure in Chicago Art:

*Phyllis Bramson
Bill Cass
L.J. Douglas
Frank Gaard
Deven Golden
Mark Jackson
Alexandra Kowenko
Paul LaMantia
Clar Monaco
Will Northerner
Sandra Perlow
Arnaldo Roche
David Sharpe
Steven Sherrell
Bruce Thayer
Michelle Stone
Ken Warneke
Karl Wirsum
Mary Lou Zelazny
Michael Zieve*

HYDE PARK ART CENTER

REVIEWS
CHICAGO



On "Casting," installation view, by DENISE BONAVENTURE, 1984. 114' x 17' x 10' (Photo by Jeff Abel)



1985. Photo by the artist, photo courtesy of Myriam Green

CASTLES

Marlene From 111919
300 N. Wacker Dr., 31217914000

This was a surprisingly calm reception compared to the work of Chicago artists in the city's "second gallery window," gallery offered a interesting mixture of abstract and representational work. In 1987, the gallery is reorganizing—changing the architecture, and it was treated accordingly, enough to make a section upon the second and exhibition of art displays.

The word "reception" implies some "to be seen" (though not "to be seen") of the artist's intention, or perhaps the artist's own view of their subjects. Instead, nothing is a surprise, except for the fact that a work from an exhibition of simple and both physical and conceptual rather than from the art world.

As for the typical installation of a work and complex by being moving. Instead from the work with the "stage" into the gallery, the artist's intention, a work is a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention. The artist's intention is not a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention.

Chicago, the greater context of art and cultural history, offers a highly important context than the cultural institutions of "reception" (the artist's intention) which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention. The artist's intention is not a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention.

Exhibiting work in a gallery is not a simple matter. It is a process of creating the physical space of the artist's work, and then presenting it to the public. The artist's intention is not a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention. The artist's intention is not a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention.

What remains is a simple's story in

the "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention. The artist's intention is not a "reception" which is the purpose of conceptual art, scattered elements, metaphorically, but using a series of steps to help with the artist's intention.

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Photo: Jeff Abel

300 N. Wacker Dr., 31217914000

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

James Yarchin Gallery
610 N. Michigan Ave., 312342-6266

The past five years or so have truly seen a "new wave" of interest in expressionistic painting techniques. The use of figurative subject matter, rendered in brilliant and dominant color combinations, has become quite "à la mode" among young painters. Artists who regularly attend galleries in Chicago has seen at least once or twice shows this fall alone devoted to this style.

It is sometimes difficult to determine which painters are doing work of distinction within such a stylistic trend, and which are simply "along for the ride." Arnaldo Roche Rabell, fortunately, seems to be more than just a trend follower, and while his work clearly displays representational elements, there are indications of a more personal stylistic element that bear watching.

There is a strong Spanish element in this work, both in terms of a predilection for religious symbols (figures in poses of benediction, or surrounded by halos) and in its use of strong color schemes—particularly oranges and reds, either alone or juxtaposed against greens and blues. The colors, if not the style, suggest the work of successful Spanish artists of the past and present.

There is also a certain romantic to the juxtaposition of these strong, masculine color schemes to the themes of submission indicated in the titles of these paintings. A work titled *Submission* in *Red* might almost pass for a crucifixion scene. A figure of a Papal character, covered with tropical images of hats and palm trees, is entitled *Agostino*. Another large painting with a reclining figure is titled *Leaving the Submission*; in this picture exactly what or whom the artist is giving in to is unclear—one assumes that this ambiguity is intentional.

One of the other intriguing elements in Roche's work is that it manages to convey a kind of religious intensity without using symbols of a particular religion. There is no cross, for example, in the work described above as a crucifixion. Even the figure in *San Juan*, surrounded with a halo of holy light, seems to be experiencing a personal experience of the eternal, rather than one associated with a specific creed. (It is worth noting that Catholicism was an important influence on the original expressionist painters.)

While the new expressionism seems to be established as the new style, the value of individual artists will still depend on their ability to create personally expressive works, reflecting their own world views rather than the mere acceptance of a trend. Arnaldo Roche Rabell gives every indication of being such an artist, and in the best of his own work he gives the viewer insight into his own relationship to reality.

JEFF ABEL

THE FIFTH
NAVY PIER
SHOW
by Henry
Hanson

CALM AFTER
THE STORM:
THE ART
INSTITUTE

SCHOOL
by Franz Schulze

OSTER

ARTISTS
by Lyon

LECTORS

TS:
PORTRAIT

T
S CRITICS

THE
DISTRICTS

Chicago

MAY 1984

\$2.25

ART IN THE
WINDY
CITY

SPECIAL
ISSUE

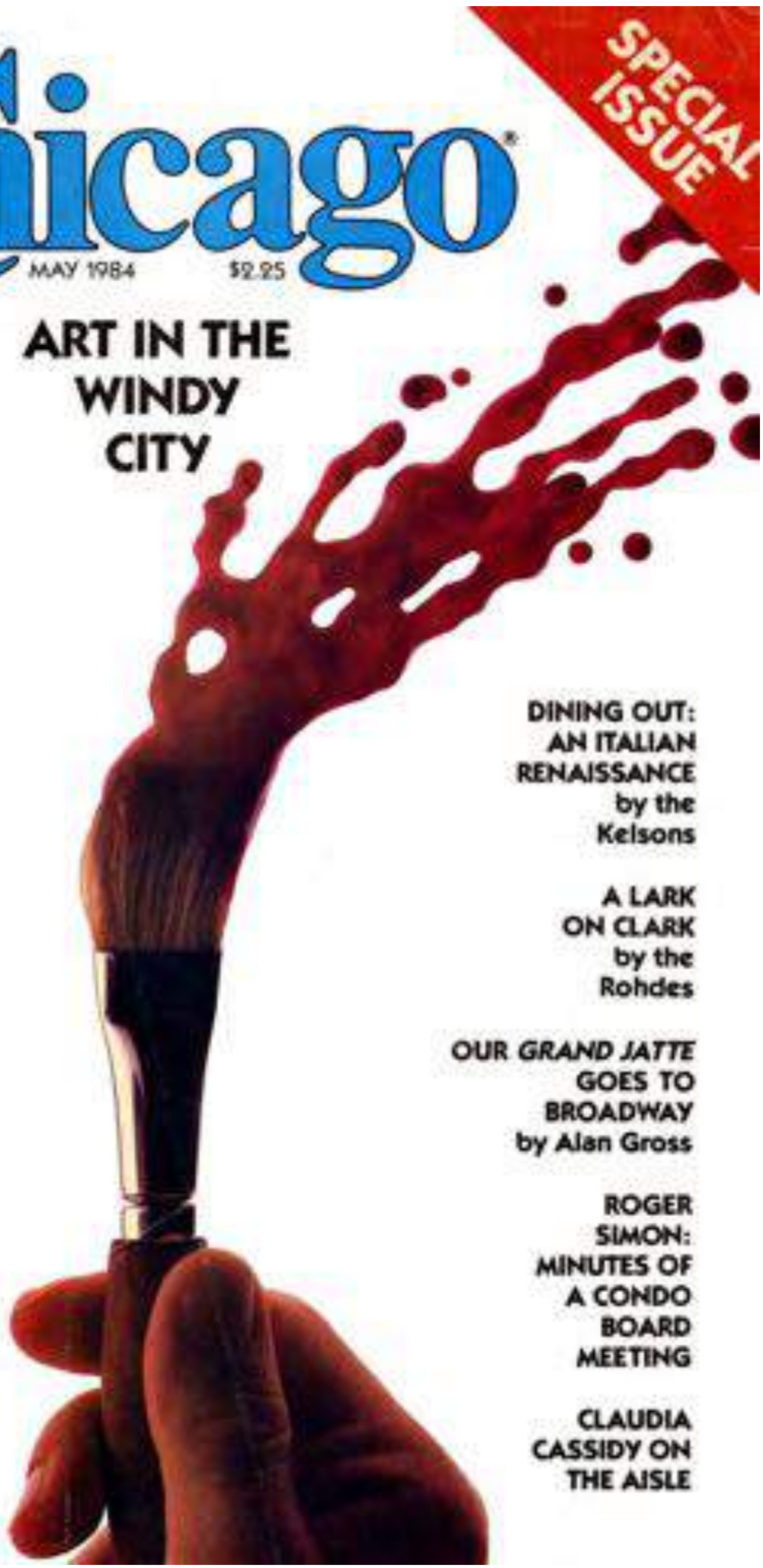
DINING OUT:
AN ITALIAN
RENAISSANCE
by the
Kelsons

A LARK
ON CLARK
by the
Rohdes

OUR GRAND JATTE
GOES TO
BROADWAY
by Alan Gross

ROGER
SIMON:
MINUTES OF
A CONDO
BOARD
MEETING

CLAUDIA
CASSIDY ON
THE AISLE



A PIER WITHOUT PEER

by **Henry Hanson** *On the eve of the fifth Art Expo at Navy Pier, a look at some plans to give the pier back to the people*

For the fifth year in a row, the lakefront will be the setting for the Chicago International Art Exposition, which has become the largest juried world-class forum of its kind. This commercial show of contemporary fine art will be held from May tenth through the 15th at Navy Pier, a landmark whose future is awash in controversy. Mayor Washington recently closed the 68-year-old pier to save one million dollars in maintenance expenses, but has allowed it to reopen for the fair.

Big cities and open waters are often linked in big splashes of visual art. The sea worked its magic in Canaletto's paintings of Venice long before the first Venice Biennale. In this country, artists have flourished in watery resort areas such as Provincetown, East Hampton, and Saugatuck, and with projects such as Christo's *Surrounded Island* in Biscayne Bay.

The future of Navy Pier has interested artists more than architects. In a 1977 etching of a giant spoon reaching into Lake Michigan, Claes Oldenburg, who grew up in Chicago, suggested that Navy Pier be



replaced with Spoon Pier. Other Oldenburg monuments for the lakefront include a giant C-Clamp rising out of the water and clomping down on the shore as if to

hold city and lake together, and a huge rearview mirror "so you can see the sunset in the west while looking east."

Chicago artist Virginia Ferrari has proposed a stainless-steel sculpture called *Tumbleweed*, resembling rolling hoops on the surface of the lake, standing 20 feet high and extending the length of the pier. John David Mooney has suggested forested ramps and a botanical garden running down the center of the pier. For the 1983 Art Exposition, a poster was made of Red Grooms's animated sketch of an activity at the pier.

Architect Harry Weese, who helped place Navy Pier on the National Landmark Register, has proposed building a floating marina and a hotel and leasing the site to a developer who knows how to market and manage. "After 25 dormant years," Weese said, "the forgotten pier should be allowed to live again. Make six piecemeal plans. Rename it Municipal Pier and give it back to the people."

Art-world interest in the pier has increased since 1990, when entrepreneur

Claes Oldenburg proposed a new pier for Chicago's lakefront in the shape of a large kitchen spoon in a 1977 etching (above) called *Spoon Pier*. In 1982 Virginia Ferrari proposed a mile-long stainless-steel sculpture running parallel to Navy Pier called *Tumbleweed* (below).



The dialogue between government and art washes over Navy Pier in waves.

John D. Wilson inaugurated the first Art Exposition. The City Council recently rejected a plan to let the Rouse Company, recyclers of waterfront projects in several major cities, turn the pier into a Coney Island of boutiques and eateries. Congressman Sidney Yates, a spokesman for the arts, has suggested that Mayor Washington study the feasibility of seeking Federal funds to

turn it into a park similar to San Francisco's waterfront Fort Mason piers. Navy Pier is frequently proposed as a site for casino gambling—another booming form of contemporary art.

Before Mayors Blandie and Burne staged ChicagoFests and ethnic holiday events at the pier, I ran into Chas Oldenborg sitting on a bench at the east end and admiring the view. He pointed to the skyline, as if discovering it for the first time, and said something like "Isn't that a remarkable line?" I think Oldenborg meant that the horizon isn't appreciated because we forget that it's there.

If you need evidence of lakeshore neglect, look at McCormick Place, which occupies some of the most valuable real estate in Chicago. Land that belonged to the people for park use has been desecrated by commercial operators who hang cur-

tains in the windows of the convention hall, pile debris and park vehicles on the strandah, and lock the doors leading to it. You can't see the horizon or the lake.

At the Navy Pier Art Exposition, the lake is part of the show and visitors can wander in and out of doors. The success of the fair is due to the high standards set by Wilson and his colleagues for the art, as well as for galleries, panel discussions, and corollary attractions.

Some 162 galleries were chosen as exhibitors by a selection committee composed of eight prominent gallery owners—Roy Boyd, Roberta Lieberman, and Donald Young of Chicago; Robert Mosk of Castell Graphics, and Max Hutchinson, both of New York; Laura Carpenter of the Delahanty gallery in Dallas; Bernard Jacobson of London; and Daniel Varenne of Geneva, Switzerland. The exhibitors in-



A new public sculpture, at 150 North Michigan Avenue, is Yaacov Agam's 35-foot-tall painted steel tower, called Communication X9 (far left). John David Mooney proposed a forested circular ramp for Navy Pier (left) and a neon lit cloud formation sculpture for the plaza in front of the pier. The latter, entitled Cloud Sculpture No. 4: A Doll's House, is now on display at the Art Institute in the 80th Exhibition by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity (below).



clude dealers from Canada, South America, Western Europe, and Asia. The Soviet Union will be represented for the first time.

In addition, 30 sculptors will display large-scale works in a Mile of Sculpture show. Before Art Expo, it was big Loop sculptures by some of the world's best artists that helped focus media attention on Chicago as an art center. The newest one-foot sculpture is a 30-foot-tall work by Jean Dubuffet, scheduled to go up this fall, with the Nestings of Governor James R. Thompson, in front of the new State of Illinois Center.

The dialogue between government and art washes over Navy Pier in waves, but it recently spilled over into a billboard controversy in the Loop. In effect greasing the skids for tawdry billboards on Loop elevated stations, the advertising firm of Foster & Klerner put portions of paintings by

some of Chicago's most respected artists—along with brief commercial messages—on ten new billboards leased from the CTA. "It's like hanging an FAT AT 100% sign around the neck of the Picasso," said Betty Carl Hill, executive director of the South Loop Planning Board. In mid-February, Mayor Washington ordered the billboards taken down, but at press time they were still up—no doubt paving the way for sun-tan-lotion and cigarette ads when the firm feels bolder.

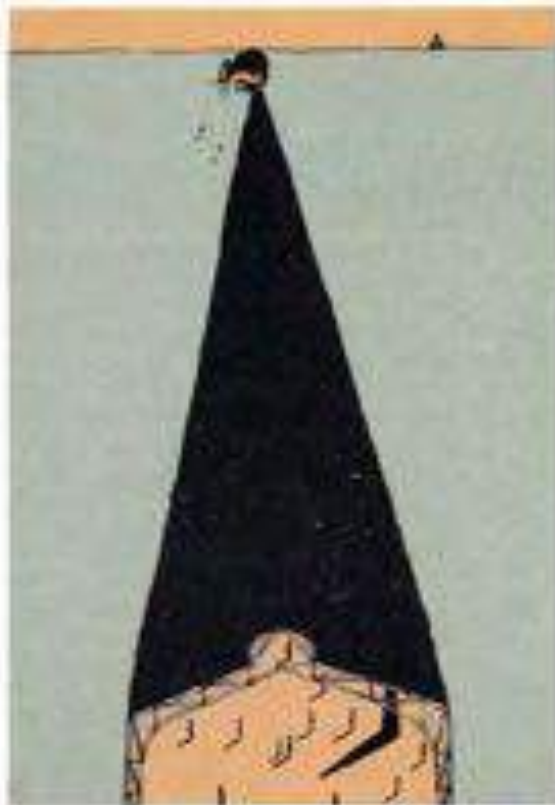
Two of the billboards featured work by Chicago's hottest (and highest-priced) artists—Roger Brown and Ed Paschke. In a city where the latest architectural iron-fist wins more attention than its art, Brown's billboard, at La Salle and Lake streets, depicted the top of architect Bruce Graham's One Magnificent Mile skyscraper, with Brown's familiar little silhouette

people and a tree-filled atrium in the clouds. Brown, whose best sociopolitical commentary has been snatched up by New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, titled the painting *Typical Modern Atrium Building Full of Bureaucrats*.

Paschke's billboard, at Monroe and Wells streets, depicted hands adjusting sunglasses (one red and one green lens) on a face peering from a blue background of wavy horizontal TV lines. I decided that Paschke's message was that motorists with two-toned sunglasses could proceed with impunity at red and green traffic lights ("Officer, I can only see out of one eye!"). Artists want you to read something into their works.

Paschke did this year's colorist poster for the art exposition, and the noted Chicago artist Martin Puryear contributed a poster for the Mile of Sculpture show. ■

To soften opposition to commercial messages, the Foster & Klerner ad agency featured Kait Wesum's *Eddy First*, a 1980 painted wood construction, on a Loop billboard (right). Martin Puryear did a poster (below, left) for the Mile of Sculpture show at Navy Pier, and Ed Paschke contributed the lithograph *Vision* (below, right) as a poster for the show at the pier.



new art examiner



In this issue:

New Painting
in Chicago

Washington, D.C.
Arms Pages

Art in the "New
York Times"

15 pages of
exhibition
reviews!

Appropriation and the
loss of authenticity



protective fires, in the reclining male atop a pier in Gisler's *Support*, and in Roche's embracing couple, who meld together in total self-abandonment, like the lovers in Edvard Munch's *The Kiss*. The faceless, shadowy, hulking form which haunts Hoskies's work exudes anxiety; he is poised as if waiting or as if suddenly surprised. Kimler's favored motif, a young hunter posed with his "kill," also emanates expectation; his youthful pride seems tinged with anxiety—perhaps a need for approval.

Vulnerability is implicit in the uninhibited embrace extended by the winged female who repeatedly appears in Brinsfield's recent work. In *Yes to Yes, No to No*, that impression is heightened by the fluttering, heart-shaped leaves that radiate out from a glowing central orb. In contrast, the frantically outlined, knife-wielding figure in Northern's *Angry Muse on a Control Circuit* attempts to mask his vulnerability with an aggressive pose—a spectre of death looms behind him; a real knife threatens to invade his pained domain.

The central figure in Zieve's *Aria*, twisted and contorted with an outward show of strength, elicits our empathy. Confrontation is also evident in L.J. Douglas's *Three Men*, where two pudgy males appear to be abducting a third whose arms are pinned behind him; one has the overwhelming sense of witnessing a crime, perhaps a kidnapping or an impending drowning.

While these artists vary in their approach—from mysterious narratives involving several figures to centralized iconic motifs—and each has evolved a highly personal vocabulary, they are united in their desire to use the human figure to express human anxieties and emotions. In each of these paintings, the artist's strong identification and sympathy with his/her protagonists is apparent, from Zieve's and Northern's aggressively macho males, to Dresner's defenseless, expectant females and Douglas's hapless victims.

In contrast to the Imagists' concern with scrupulous finish, for these artists, creation is as much a process of discovery as it is the visual realization of a preconceived idea. Much of their work displays a layered effect, with the various stages of production preserved in the final painting; evidence of accident, serendipity, and other formal "happenings" remain.

It is often difficult to discern the precise subject matter of much of this work at first glance—figure and



ARNALDO ROCHE, "Domain," oil on canvas, 1982.



LINDA KING, "Untitled," oil on canvas, 1984. Photo courtesy of Peter Miller Gallery.

ground, figure and figure, all seem to overlap and interpenetrate. Because few of the figures wear clothing, we are deprived of the opportunity to assign them either a temporal or a geographic niche; most are faceless by virtue of cropping, lighting, or rendering, forcing us to deduce their emotions and reactions from their postures alone. Even those figures who are endowed with facial expressions are strangely anonymous. They are not personalities but symbols, vehicles for deeper psychological and emotional truths. Monumental in scale, and distorted almost beyond recognition, a number of these figures are only marginally human, as if they have been boiled

down to those essentials necessary for the communication of a particular message.

Purposful ambiguity extends to the setting of these dramas as well. The figures exist in open, unspecified locations, in direct contrast to the seedy urban milieu and claustrophobic interiors which have become hallmarks of Imagism. References to architecture, the man-made world—to any thing which might lend these images an identifiable context—are scrupulously avoided in favor of generic symbols of nature or natural forces, and murky atmospheric effects. The figures, for the most part, are enveloped by their settings, veiled or captured in environments of rubbed, smeared, scumbled, or piled-up paint. A limited palette, usually dark and tending toward the neutral range, reinforces the feeling that these figures inhabit a netherworld—the world of the psyche and of myth.

These figures, which both exact and elicit primal fears, anxieties, impulses, and desires, seem light years away from the street-wise actors of Imagism. But, in the final analysis, one is struck by these new painters' preoccupation with the time-honored "Chicago" themes of sex and violence, and by their tendency to suffuse their figures in an aura of menace—a favorite device of the Imagists. The psychological edge of this work constitutes yet another affinity with Imagism.

Examining these new painters individually, one discovers a selective culling from the Imagists; elements are chosen and then combined with other influences. Thus, even for artists who can be seen to collectively pursue a vastly different aesthetic, Imagism is a point of both reference and departure.

But these painters have attempted to maintain in Chicago a sense of introspection, a highly individualized humanism, a belief in the essentially optimistic, communicable power of picture making that bears a more genetic resemblance to the artists of the *Monster Roster*; the new Chicago painters have both expanded and galvanized the notion of an indigenous, but not insular, Chicago brand of art. Their accomplishment is already worthy of note, as to their place in Chicago's art history . . . ■

ALICE THORSON is the managing editor and Midwest editor of the NAE. JAMES YOOD teaches art history at Loyola University and is the Chicago editor of the NAE.

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL
EVENTOS
MILAGROS
Y
VISIONES



M U S E O
DE LA UNIVERSIDAD
RIO PIEDRAS, PUERTO RICO
JUNIO 12 - JULIO 30
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ART IN THE UNITED STATES

THIRTY CONTEMPORARY PAINTERS & SCULPTORS

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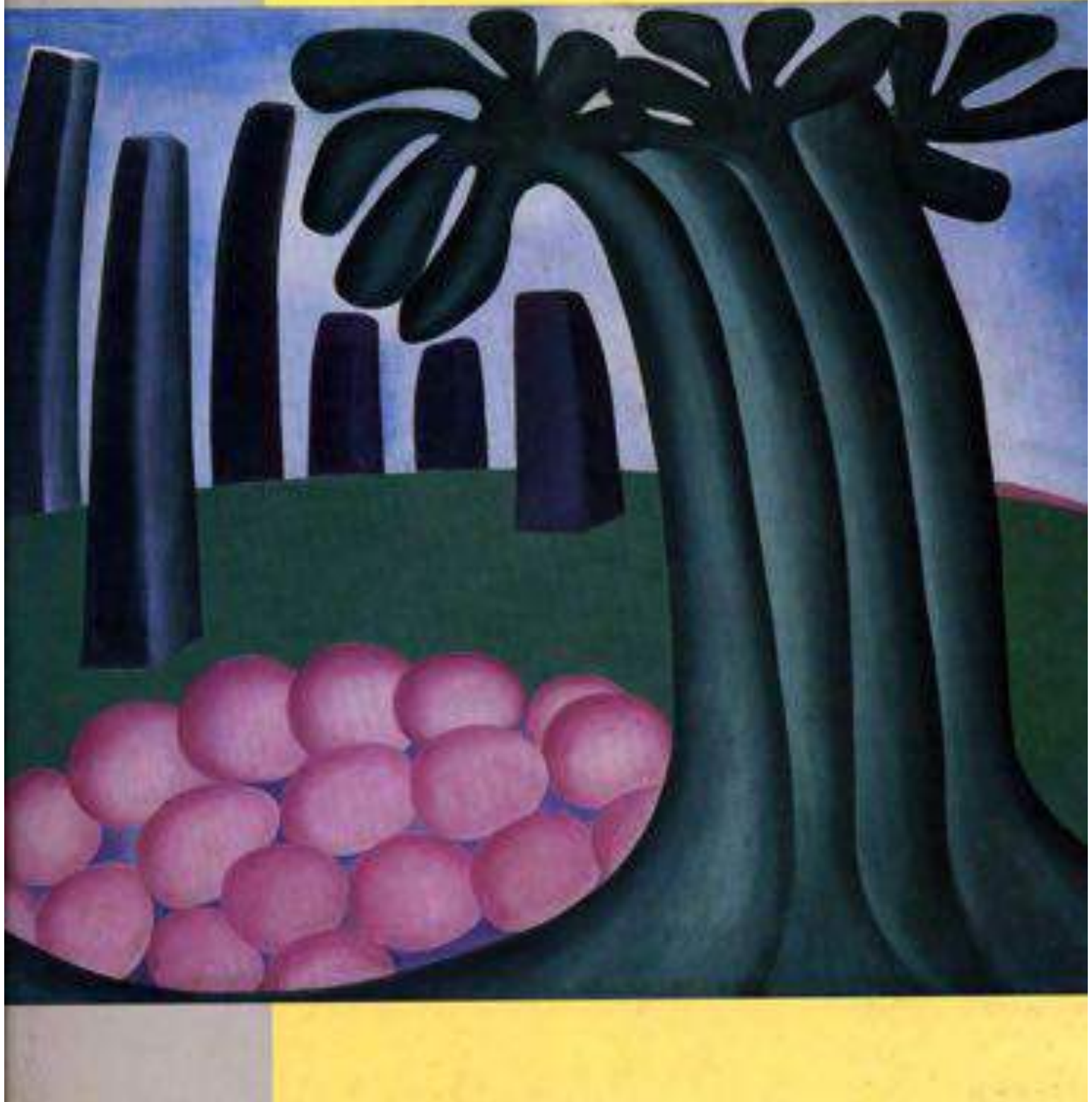
Hispanic

ART IN THE UNITED STATES

Art of the

Fantastic

Latin America, 1920-1987



Art of the Fantastic: Latin America, 1920-1987

by Holliday T. Day
and Hollister Sturges

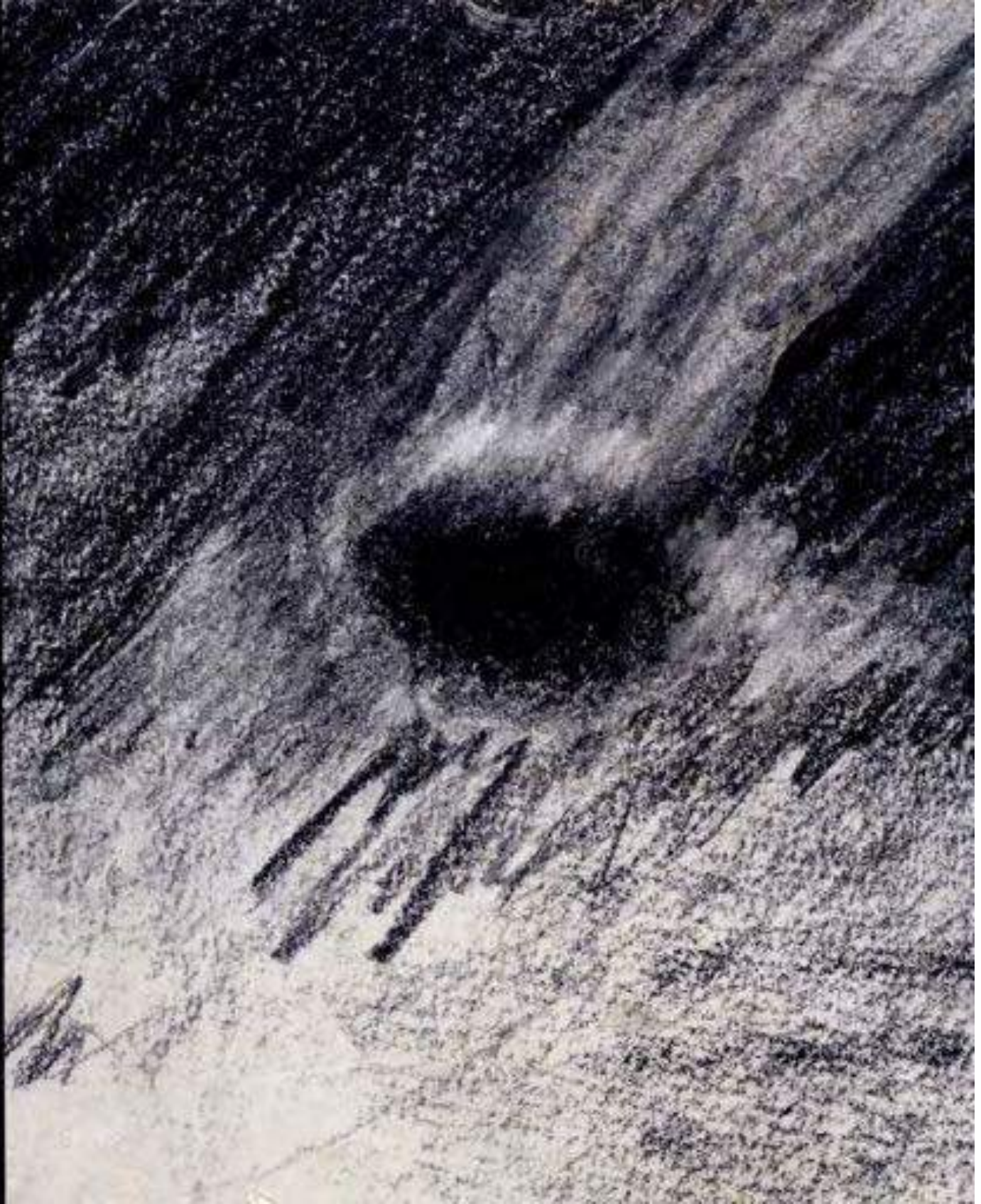
with contributions by
Edward Lucie-Smith,
Damian Bayón, and others

Published by
Indianapolis Museum of Art
Indianapolis, Indiana

Recent
Developments
in

Latin American Drawing

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



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ROCHE

IN THE
HANDS
OF THE
BEHOLDER

An exhibition of drawings and paintings by Arnaldo Roche Rabell
THE CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER—SEPT. 5 TO NOV. 7, 1987



ARTnews

December 1987

\$4.50



**Rembrandt: The
Unvarnished Truth?**

**Arnold Newman's
Portraits of the Artists**

**Beverly Pepper:
Woman of Steel**



REVIEWS



Maria Lora,
Installation view,
1987, Margo
Levine.

Diagrams, key to the construction of space, was Lora's orchestration of the viewer's movement through rhythmic patterns of lines and color, scale and movement, line and volume, surface texture and suggestive play. The exhibition deliberately kept the all but one wall permanent visual evidence, leaving on the eye's participation as it explored the dynamic landscape of multiple but related objects.

Some of Lora's forms and his strategy were familiar from past exhibitions. The forms themselves were the purely and essential function of structure but evoked the resonance of historical images, both real and sculptural, skulls and vessels, Archetype. Other their juxtaposition suggested opposing relations, as in two vertical forms, pieces of fused light, propped on opposite sides of a projecting wall—a wall where together function and disability as a mask and a faded topped "form"—suggesting a complex negotiation between human vulnerability and aggression.

Lora plays with materials as he plays with walls, creating positive territory between their natural progression and the invention of his forms. Color, too, has become a language of important role, finding dimensions for the eye through space. Like color—some of them is dark—then about elements and also, patchy blackboard, it begins, and then, with its dark, blue-gray tones.

A part of the vital and infectious energy of the show was generated by the play of gravity—horizontal lines to connect with vertical ones—and by various shapes

the suggest a spinning motion, such as the hovering, typically precisely horizontal in line movement with Lora's work at the height like "alone" that signaled not far away from a on the floor.

Finally, and possibly, in its apparent position as a metaphor for a certain achievement, Lora included an "old man out" in the form of an extremely cool, rising like landscape freshly appeared into a chaotic party of his more strongly defined forms. In his eyes added a contrasting question mark, suggesting ground to be a plane.

—Peter Chelton

Chicago

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

Chicago Public Library
Cultural Center

These compelling pictures have roots in Roche's Puerto Rican heritage and his esthetic ties to Chicago, where he came in the late '70s to study at the School of the Art Institute. His expressive images fre-



Arnaldo Roche Rabell, "One More Time, the Blind Men Asked Himself if There is Anybody Out There", 1987, ink on glassed paper, 79 by 132 inches. Chicago Public Library Cultural Center.

quently begins with an unusual transfer process, in which the artist coats pressed paper with cooking ink, places it over the body of a nude model, and scrapes away along the body's contours to expose eloquent highlights. Or, with a canvas blanketing the model, Roche rubs paint on with both hands, making a kind of transfer print of the human form.

Wrapping the canvas around the front and sides of his model, Roche produces an image broader than a single frontal view; his figures thus look hugely monumental or appear to unfold like flayed skin before our eyes. Still-life objects—coat hangers, tableware, scissors—surrounding these giants in their exotic yet oddly familiar environments are also traces of the real things, rubbed onto the canvas the way a child might preserve the impression of a leaf.

Roche often uses the same interior, with a view through potted face curtains onto a modern city, and the same table and household objects to provide the setting for symbolic dramas of life and death. In one picture, a naked shaman dances on the table; in another, the table becomes a bier for a corpse-like man holding up a mirror to the light of day. Finally, in a haunting image entitled *The Sacrifice*, the table is set as if for a banquet—and the main dish is the artist's own severed head.

Such self-portraits can be horrific, like Arnulf Rainer's agonized introspections or Lucien Samaras's grotesque photo-transformations. Three drawings, entitled *Burn, Burned, and Burning* depict Roche's features progressively engulfed in flames, as if recorded by thermal photography in the process of being consumed in a radiant holocaust.

There's an question of realism in Roche's work, even though his pictures derive so directly from the real thing. But with all the distortions and bizarre juxtapositions, there's an unflinching realism of emotion that's almost painful to see.

—Sue Taylor

Miami

PURVIS YOUNG

Greene

Purvis Young paints with expressionistic, gestural fervor on found objects—seat covers, patches of tin, and big splintered boards. He's been called a chronicler of Overtown, Miami's inner city, where he lives and works. Intricate crowds of dancing figures, brooding faces, horses, and trucks are recurrent serial images in his works.

Young first attracted attention in the '60s,



Purvis Young, *Untitled*, 1987, mixed media on wood, 48 by 40 inches. Greene.

when he painted murals on boarded-up buildings in Overtown. For this artist, who transforms materials others have discarded, abandoned buildings are perhaps the ultimate found object. Although he has no formal training, Young is nevertheless gaining recognition for his distinctive and powerful art. He was commissioned to paint a mural wrapping around the exterior walls of the Calmer/Overtown branch of the Metro-Dade Public Library; it will replace the one he painted inside Miami's downtown library, which was destroyed when a new structure was erected. In 1986 Metro-Dade Art in Public Places commissioned a massive acrylic mural from Young that now dominates the Northside station of Metrorail. His work also appeared in a traveling exhibition of "outsider" folk art organized by the Von Luederwaldt Museum of Art.

Young is capable of working on both a grand and an intimate scale. Included in this show was a collection of the artist's "assembled" printed works—including discarded library books, old ledgers, hospital records, and other such material retrieved from trash heaps. Young transforms nearly every page with paintings and collage. The results are vibrant, tactile volumes replete with provocative juxtapositions of text, photographs, paintings, and crayon drawings.

The paintings are characterized by a restless sense of line that is at once fluid and frantic. Some works are dominated by a single image. In one, several black horses balance on top of each other against a

brusky field of orange and green. Painted on splintered wood, the image looks rough and weathered, conveying a tough, street-wise energy. Other works on wood depict crowded, rhythmic networks of various abstract figures and shapes in vivid colors. Often the figures are black silhouettes that seem—with their arched backs and raised arms—to be swaying in and out of jostling crowds.

Young's accomplished use of line and color gives many of his figurative works a passionate, abstract quality. The mixture of the abstract and the figurative it will suited to these brooding, tense paintings.

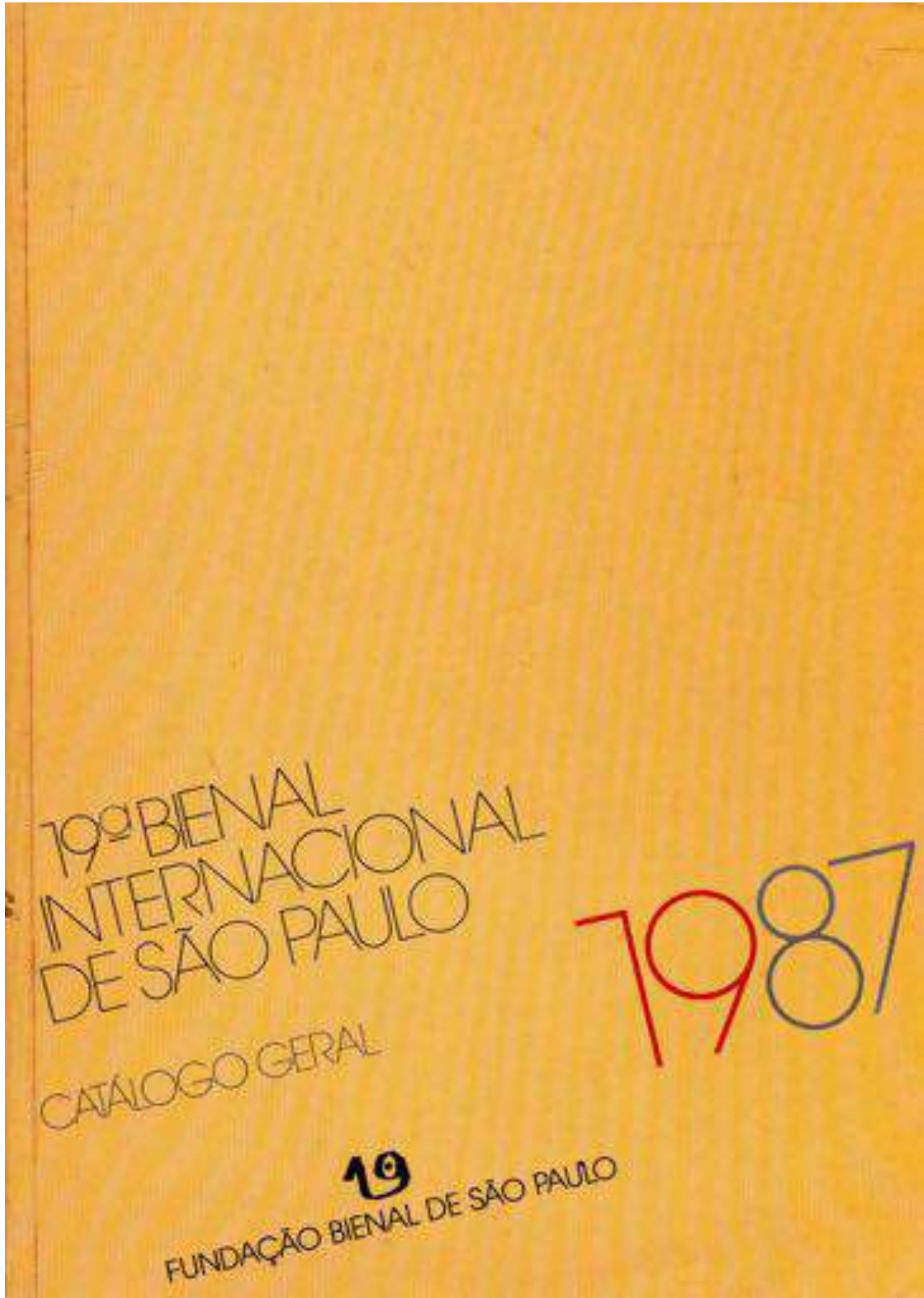
—Elisa Turner

San Francisco

ANN CARTER

Janet Steinberg

Ann Carter is an abstract painter first and a sculptor second. Her simple, nine-foot wood forms of a few years ago rested on the floor and leaned against the wall like South Sea Island-Northwest Indian headdresses, their position lending them an air of accessibility and potential action. Now she has opted to project her pieces from the wall or let them barely hover in that position. But rather than their physical structure, it is surface and color—the implied mass achieved through tone over time—that define this work and supply the action. The dimensional elements work best when



ROCHE, Arnaldo
1903-1973

Nasceu em Santurce em 1905.
Estudou na Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidad de
Puerto Rico e no Institute of Chicago. É mestre em Artes.

OBRAS APRESENTADAS:

1. Espelhos e Paternidade/Espies y Paternidad, 1965
Crayon de óleo sobre papel engessado, 238 x 501,5 cm
Col. Arq. José M. Ramirez Garcia
2. Golcha/Golcha, 1965
Crayon de óleo sobre papel, 209 x 150 cm
Col. José Umpert



7-67

ARTS

MAGAZINE

JANUARY 1988
\$5.00

The second word, which reminds me of Italian names, and of our discussions on etymology, also expresses my annoyance in respect of the fact that my friend has kept his address a secret from me; but each of the possible first three words may be recognized on analysis as an independent and equally justifiable starting-point in the concatenation of ideas.

During the night before the funeral of my father I dreamed of a printed notice, a card or poster which like the notices at the railway stations or railway stations which announce that searching is prohibited. The sign reads either:—

You are requested to shut the eyes

or

You are requested to shut one eye

an alternative which I am in the habit of representing in the following form:

the
You are requested to shut eye(s).
one

Each of the two versions has its special meaning, and leads along new paths in the domain of language. I had made the alternative mark which I have indicated in the margin of the original manuscript. For I have seen the demand that should be made of those members of the family business did not suppose of such a nature that they should feel ashamed to be asked to shut one eye or the other. The significance of the alternative which I have indicated in the margin of the original manuscript is that it is not the same as the other should have been. The significance of the alternative which I have indicated in the margin of the original manuscript is that it is not the same as the other should have been.

THE ART OF THE FANTASTIC: FROM TAMAYO TO RABELL

JOHN LOUGHERY

Specifically directed to the theatrical, non-naturalistic, or surreal aspects of Latin American art, the survey of "Art of the Fantastic" is as panoramic and provocative as it is fantastic, suggesting substantive achievements in painting.

Cultural chauvinism dies hard, but it does eventually bow to overwhelming evidence of all that it has excluded or devalued. In the last ten to twenty years, for instance, North Americans have become much more alert to the richness of Latin American literature, and names like Borges, Paz, Márquez, Amado, and Puig are now as familiar

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, *You Have to Dream in Blue*, 1986. Oil on canvas, 84 x 60".
Collection of the Artistic Chair and Administration of the Museum of Art and Queens, Queens, NY.

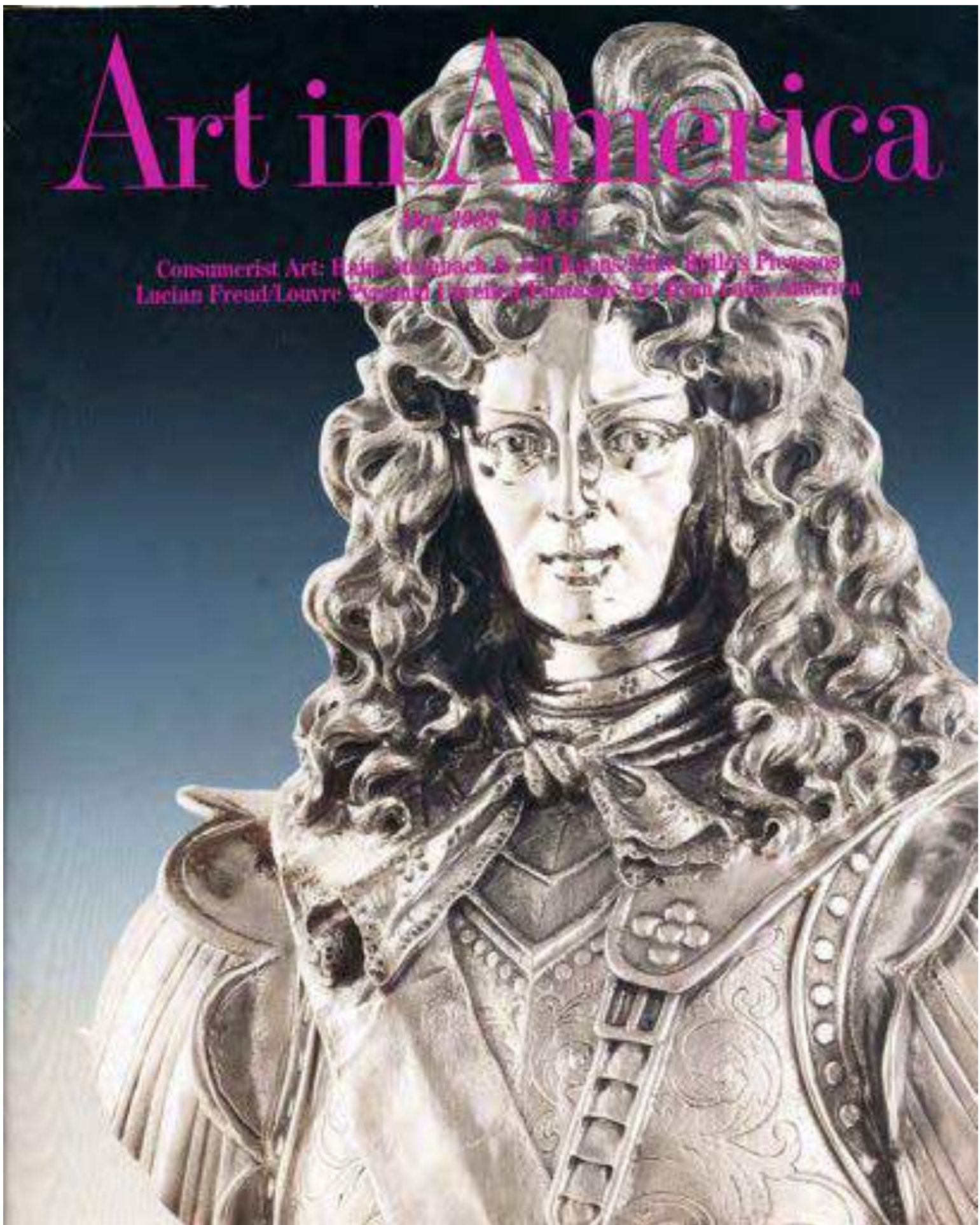


to literate readers in the United States as those of Eliot, Pound, Faulkner, Barth, and Beowulf. Unfortunately, the same hasn't been true of Latin American painting, though that situation may be changing. The Guggenheim's Rufino Tamayo retrospective several years ago was a revelatory experience for many students of modern art, and the work of younger Latin American painters has been appearing more regularly in New York galleries throughout the 1980s. Certainly, it's about time. The paucity of Latin American talent in international surveys and theme shows in American museums has often been remarked upon, and perhaps such curatorial indifference, or apologetics, will become increasingly difficult to justify in the years ahead.

"Art of the Fantastic: Latin American Painting, 1920-1987," organized by the Indianapolis Museum of Art and recently seen at the Queens Museum, was to my knowledge the first show of its kind in the United States. Its intention was to survey one aspect of that area's art, namely painting of a theatrical, non-naturalistic or surreal character, while analyzing common preoccupations—Catholicism, colonialism, politics, etc.—and emerging differences over the span of three generations. An exhibition of extraordinary diversity, even within the context of its specific focus, it offered a useful sense of what we've been missing. Six, surely, half of the 29 painters included are unknown to those outside "the field" and most of the 71 paintings on view will be new encounters for American museumgoers. Even the fact that the cramped galleries of the Queens Museum are far from a desirable space in which to absorb a show of this size did nothing to diminish its impact. From the classic modernism of Roberto Matta, Joaquín Torres-García, and Wilfredo Lam to the personal and hauntingly symbolic works of Frida Kahlo and Elicio Maldonado to the artistic objects of Luis Cruz Azaceta and Gerardo Vergara, "Art of the Fantastic" had a fascinating story to tell of cultural crosscurrents, cosmopolitan influence, local adversity, and original accomplishment.

The first generation the exhibition was concerned with was that group of men and women born just before or just after the turn of the century who needed to find their way out of a potentially stifling heritage and environment. These "early modernists" had no hope of fulfilling themselves in their native countries, which lacked any tradition of an avant-garde, and instead looked to Europe for pictorial ideas and artistic inspiration. Like the first generation of American modernists, many of them spent time in Paris and took what was meaningful to them from Cubism and, even more so, from Surrealism. By merging aspects of these breakthrough styles with enough elements distinctive to their part of the world, Rufino Tamayo and Roberto Matta (both of whom are still alive), Tarsila do Amaral, Frida Kahlo, Joaquín Torres-García, Wilfredo Lam, and Alejandro Soler created a body of work that stands on equal terms with the painting of other countries of the same era. Soler's playful, dreamlike structures and figures in watercolor might remind us of Paul Klee, and Torres-García's grids clearly connect him to the influence of Mondrian and De Stijl, while Amaral's spectacular distortions and compositions in *Abapuro* (1928) and *The Forest* (1929) are inevitably linked in our minds to Picasso and the Surrealists, but there is always enough in the spirit, subject matter, and color of these pictures to make them much more than derivative effects. Motifs from Mexican folk art, South American mythology, native pottery, or Catholic theology come together with an exacting concern for original modern form.

In this section of the show, Frida Kahlo's four small paintings are a particularly good example of the integration of Catholic and regional symbolism in an intensely personal portrait style. Kahlo's obsessive theme is vulnerability, loss, and the exhilaration of pain. (A preoccupation that was only too plausible; at the age of eighteen Frida Kahlo was injured in a trolley car accident that broke her pelvis and spinal column and skewered her through the womb with a steel nail, leaving her permanently disfigured and unable to bear children.) In one of her many meticulously drawn self-portraits, in a version of the style sometimes called magic realism, she surrounds herself with suggestive objects and creatures. Two monkeys hover nervously and protectively by the shoulders of this somber, stoical woman in *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird* (1940). Her necklace is made of thorns and a small bird, tied to the necklace, serves as a sculptural. Against a tropical backdrop, images of goddesses and torture alternately blend and cancel one another out. Kahlo's distress is deconstructed more explicitly in *The Broken Column* (1939), a picture of a mechanical



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Latin Visions and Revisions

"Art of the Fantastic," an ambitious thematic exhibition, redressed many stereotypical readings of Latin American art and culture. Conveying a newly complex picture of a long neglected field, this recent show also raised some provocative political questions.

BY SHIFRA M. GOLDMAN

Considering long-existing North American attitudes toward countries of the South, it is perhaps not surprising that a major North American art exhibition surveying Latin American modernism is called "Art of the Fantastic." However, Latin Americans are understandably sensitive when outsiders brand their cultures "fantastic," "primitive" or "colorful"; these adjectives suggest exotic tourist attractions. Latin Americans also resent the notion that they are basically visceral or emotional peoples, thinking from the solar plexus (as one critic has suggested) and with an inability to think cognitively. And yet the appellation "fantastic" continues to have a special appeal for North Americans. As the Brazilian art historian Aracy Amaral observed recently, the prevalence of the term is either symptomatic of a "moment in the art fashion of our day or simply a cliché of how hegemonic nations view Latin America."¹ Either way—fashion or cliché—the notion of the fantastic allows foreign visitors to Latin America to ignore the debilitating poverty and misery, the violent dictatorships (often supported by European or North American powers), the thriving urban culture and the complex histories of colonization and subjugation. By focusing narrowly on a particular reading of the fantastic, North Americans and Europeans observe Latin American culture from a cool distance. It is constructed as the Other.

But in the Latin American countries themselves there is a sense in which many people, artists in particular, accept and cherish their version of the fantastic. Since the 1940s, when an interest in magic realism and the marvelous surfaced, Latin Ameri-



Frida Kahlo: Self-Portrait with Diego on my Mind, 1943, oil on masonite, 30 by 24 inches. Gelman Collection.

Opposite, Wifredo Lam: Malambo, The God of the Crossroads, 1942, oil on canvas, 62 by 49 inches. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Shapiro, Oak Park, Illinois.

the Fantastic" bypasses the mid-'40s and the decade of the '50s, because that period of postwar industrialization fueled more concrete poetry and geometric abstraction than visions of the fantastic.

In the extensive catalogue for the exhibition, the curators and their Latin American advisors and contributors postulate a number of subtexts that link these three periods: the Latin American response to cultural and political influences from Europe and the U.S.; the awareness of so-called primitive art (once so much in vogue with the European avant-garde); the role of Catholicism in shaping Latin American culture; the still potent effects of the colonial past; the responses to political oppression and the growing social commitment of artists; and, finally, the geographic and psychological isolation of Latin America from the First World. The elaboration of these themes fills a lacuna in general studies of modern art, especially for North American audiences whose art histories have systematically excluded Latin American art. Unfortunately the catalogue suffers from a superficial and inaccurate introduction by the English critic Edward Lucie-Smith. But the lengthy biographies of the artists and the copious illustrations provide a number of important insights into the interchanges between Europe, North America and Latin America throughout the modernist period.

Many of the early modernists were already familiar to North American viewers, artists such as the Chilean Roberto Matta, the Cuban Wilfredo Lam and the Mexicans Rufino Tamayo and Frida Kahlo. In this exhibition they were represented with outstanding works. There were also many artists who should be better known, in particular the Argentine Alejandro Xul Solar. His small, exquisite watercolors of cubistic figures interwoven with texts appear almost shamanistic, but actually represent his personal fantasies. Two of his works, the Klee-like watercolors *Not a Couple* (1924) and *Other Peer* (1929), are original and whimsical evocations of the cosmopolitan city life of Buenos Aires. Part Italian, part German—as are many Argentines—he changed his name in 1924 from Schultz Solaris to Xul Solar (to suggest light: "lux" spelled backwards, and "solar" for the sun). He was an active member of the most influential, nationalistic Argentinean avant-garde movement in the 1920s, the *Martín-Ferristas*.

But of all the early modernists, Brazil's Tarsila do Amaral was perhaps the greatest revelation to North American audiences. Her brilliant color, simplified and exagger-

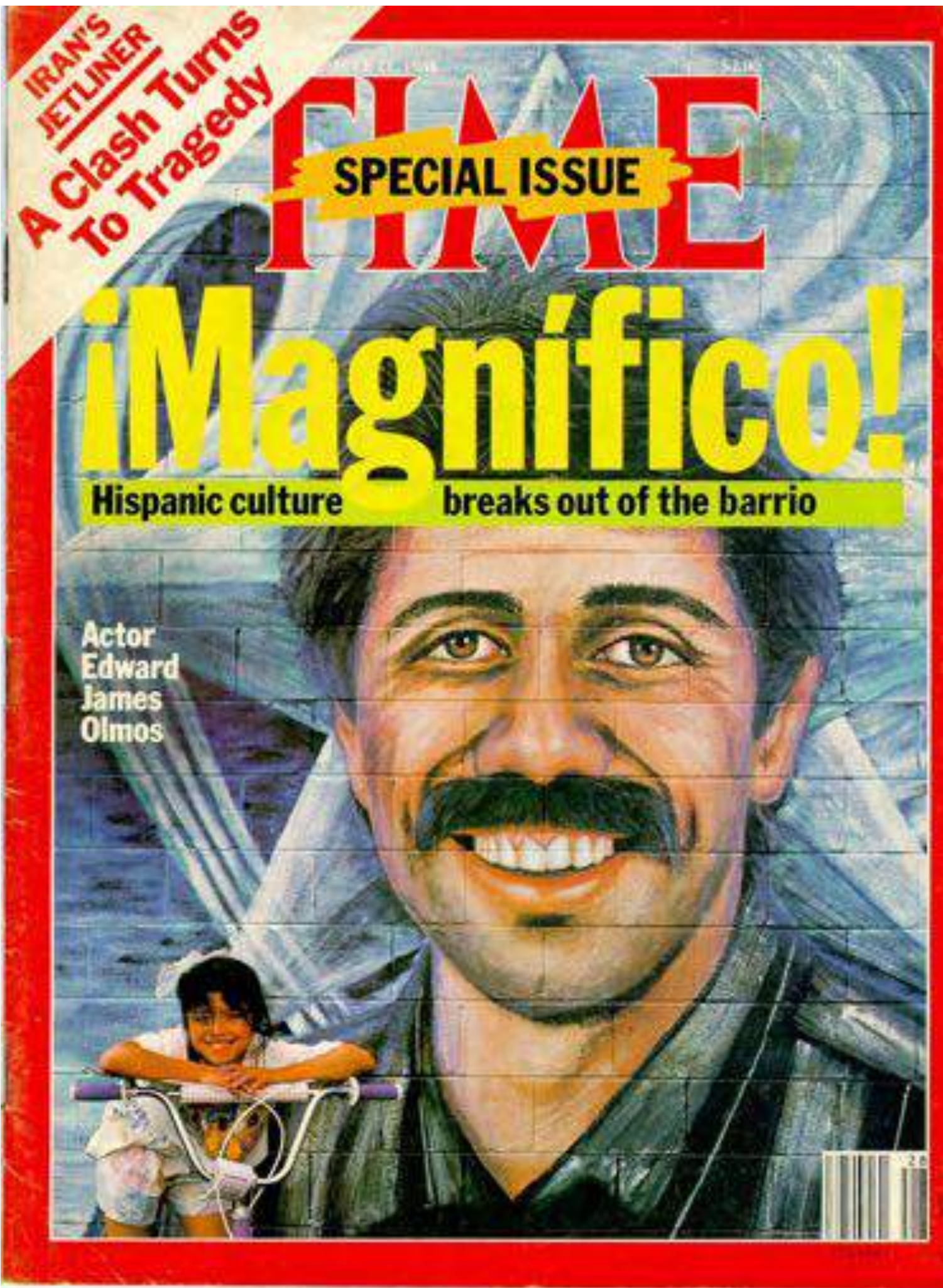


Tarsila do Amaral: *You have to Dream in Blue*, 1936, oil on canvas, 21 by 40 inches. Collection the artist.

ated figures (some of which owe a debt to Léger), tropical symbolism and Afro-Indian references (that have nothing to do with "exoticism") fuse native "primitivism" with European vanguardism to establish a modernist Brazilian identity. Amaral's painting *Aleporu* (1928) became the pictorial metaphor for a cultural philosophy known as *antropofagia* or cannibalism, which was articulated by her companion (later husband), the poet Oswald de Andrade. "Cannibalizing" European art and culture (the "sacred enemy," according to Andrade),

absorbing what was useful and rejecting what was not (like the "sins" of Catholicism and Freud), these Brazilian intellectuals sought to establish precisely the sort of cultural self-definition that they felt had been denied them by their colonizers. (In this respect, the Anthropophagus movement romantically paralleled that of the Indigenist movements of the same period which took a Social Realist turn in Mexico, Central America and the Andes.)

For artists emerging in the 1960s, the terms of the discourse had changed. The



An Article by Robert Huhges



clamatory: Luis Jiminez's figures of Latino cowboys and migrant workers and their women in the Southwest are imbued with a raucous vitality—Rubenesque honky-tonk. There is what the catalog calls the "obsessive urbanism" of Los Angeles Barrio Painter Frank Romero, for whom the recurrent image of the car, that chariot of the ego, turns up even in toy form in a passionately brushed still life. But then there is internalization too, as in the triptych of self-portraits by the Puerto Rican artist Arnaldo Roche. In Roche's *The Spirit of the Flesh*, *Carving the Spirit of the Flesh* and *Burning the Spirit of the Flesh*, one seems to witness the progressive disintegration and peeling away of the self under the pressure of some psychic force.

ROCHE

Revealing self-portrait:
The Spirit of the Flesh

DRAWING THE LINE

ART AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA



ORIANA BADDELEY & VALERIE FRASER

C H I C A G
O • A R T I S
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D I T I O N

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Chicago Artists

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Steven Heyman

Gary Justis

David Kargl

Art Kleinman

David Kotker

Jim Lutes

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell

Chuck Walker

Mary Lou Zelazny

in the European Tradition

By Lynne Warren

Museum of
Contemporary Art

February 25 -
April 9, 1989

MIXED BLESSINGS



NEW ART IN A MULTICULTURAL AMERICA

LUCY R. HIPARD

usually pictured with a broom, a kind of spiritual janitor. At the other end of the spectrum, political art clichés like barbed wire and the Puerto Rican independence flag take on new resonance because of the many-layered context in which they are placed.

Confronting the fragmentation of his culture by imperialism and dispersion, Sánchez lovingly weaves his fragments into a new fabric that is both spiritually restorative and politically radical. The patches in his quiltlike paintings (or comforters) are words, photos he takes himself, quotations and images that recall homely, proud, and rebellious moments from the distant and recent pasts of Borinquén (the indigenous name for the island). He mourns the sterilization of one third of the women living in Puerto Rico, the number of Puerto

a conservative pro-statehood government in 1968, and in Puerto Rico, as elsewhere in that period, art became political and explosive. The independentista movement and the disproportionate number of Puerto Ricans serving and dying in Vietnam were among the sparks.

—based on Mari Carmen Ramirez, *Puerto Rican Painting Between Past and Present* (Washington, D.C.: Museum of Modern Art of Latin America, 1987)



Fig. 23: Arnaldo Roche Rabell, *Now You Know How I Feel*, 1985, oil crayons on gelco paper, 66" x 50" (Photo courtesy Galeria Botella, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico.) At least two, perhaps three figures, painted black and white, but all with African features, are superimposed or merged in this poignant image of conflicting identities. The large head (a self-portrait) with two pairs of eyes seems to loom behind the kneeling figure, which has two pairs of arms. The larger eyes gaze at the viewer with an unavoidable stare. Tense, haunting, and confrontational, the drawing supports Mari Carmen Ramirez's contention that Roche's subjects are "usually violent dreams or visions that he has experienced intensely" and that he paints to exorcise these "monstrous events"—a metaphor implying Puerto Rico's social history. Roche lives part-time in Chicago, where he received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute.

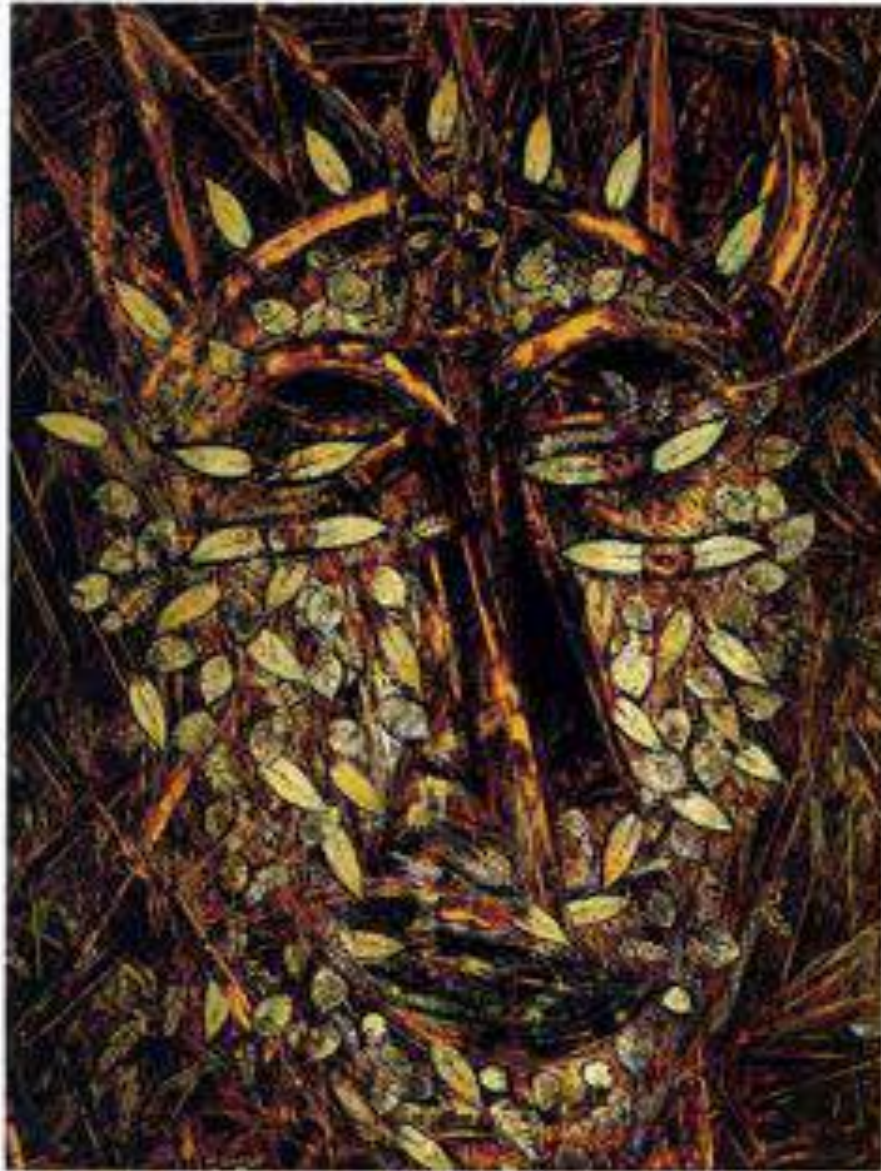
ARTSPACE

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Arnaldo Roche Rabell, *Cae 'ho Se Ma*, 90" x 72" oil on canvas, 1989.
Courtesy Lisa Sette Gallery, Scottsdale.

THE PHYSICAL FANTASIES OF
ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

William Peterson

*"You do yet taste some subtleties of the isle,
That will not let you believe things certain."
— The Tempest*

54

April 1990 \$4.50

ARTnews

THE ART OF
DESIGN



**Who Are
the Artists
to Watch?**

**Conflicts
of Interest:
A Radical
Proposal**



Arnaldo Roche Rabell



AT A TIME WHEN MANY artists claim to have rejected authenticity and originality, 34-year-old Arnaldo Roche Rabell's painting is defiantly passionate and personal. "It's dealing," he says, "with my whole attitude toward life." His unsettling, life-size figures, made from rubbings of real people, and his self-portraits, carved into layers of hardened paint, have an almost overwhelming intensity.

Roche, though, has skill as well as grit. Born in Puerto Rico in 1955, he studied architecture before coming to Chicago to pursue his interest in painting and drawing at the School of the Art Institute. He found mentors there, including Richard Loescher, who chairs the department of art history and criticism. Roche won several drawing prizes and became the first Puerto Rican to be awarded the Medallion of Lincoln. He earned his M.F.A. in 1984. Currently he works in a renovated industrial building on Chicago's West Side, in a studio with high ceilings and large windows that are covered with black plastic. He says that working in half-light is better for his unusual rubbing techniques.

Dreams Are Fragile, 1989, attempts, like many of Arnaldo Roche Rabell's other works, to heal the divisions within the artist's psyche.

Many of his most poignant images reflect a scrupulous attempt to reconcile a divided sense of cultural and personal identity. His self-portraits often use the metaphor of dismemberment. In *Blind Dreams* (1988), for instance, Roche's head, wreathed in tropical greenery, rests on a table like an elaborate centerpiece. And *Dreams Are Fragile* (1989) pictures the coming together of Roche's two different worlds: a thicket of exotic foliage wraps around towering Chicago skyscrapers as if they were trellises in some fabulous tropical garden. "There's an incredible sense of integrity that goes into his work," observes Loescher.

To begin a painting, Roche first places his model in a reclining pose on the studio floor. Wrapping the body in primed canvas, he then traces the form, both front and sides, with paint-smeared hands. When the canvas is removed, a disquieting image with a bloated torso and teased musculature has emerged. Working all over, like an action painter, he may then add the imprint of leaves, or

the rubbing of a chair, table, or mirror to build up densely packed layers of intimate detail with an energy that, in his words, "impacts life itself."

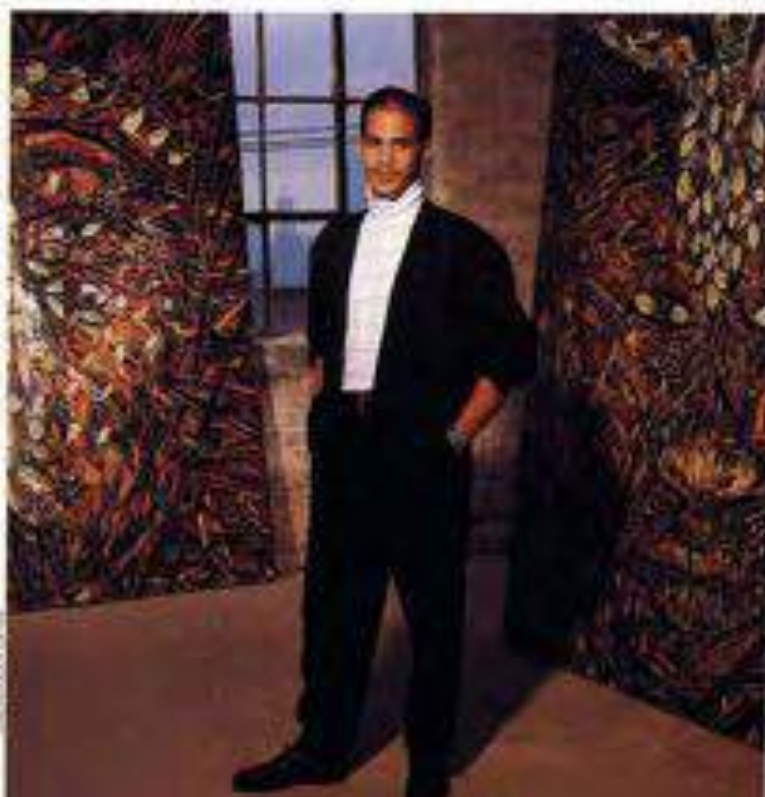
With his lushly textured surfaces, Roche leads the viewer into a face-off with some brutal images. "Formally," Loescher explains, "his work can be very beautiful, rich, sensual, while the content can be pretty tough and often very painful." Roche himself sees his work as very much a part of a Chicago tradition, "the confrontational point of view and anxiety of artists such as Ivan Albright and Leon Golub."

Roche will have his first one-person New York exhibition next month at Franklin/Adams Gallery. It will be a chance for him to demonstrate that his work can appeal to a broad audience. His paintings have appeared in several local and national surveys of Hispanic art over the past few years. Yet,

Roche puts both his heart and his muscles into the large paintings he creates in his Chicago studio.

as Lynne Warren of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art is quick to point out, "he doesn't speak for just one culture."

—Garrett Holg



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SHOW

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TONY LABAT

CARY S. LEIBOWITZ

ADRIAN PIPER

ARNALDO ROCHE-RABELL

KAY ROSEN

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T H E M U S E U M O F M O D E R N A R T , N E W Y O R K



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ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

You Know I Am Aware

1990

Oil on canvas

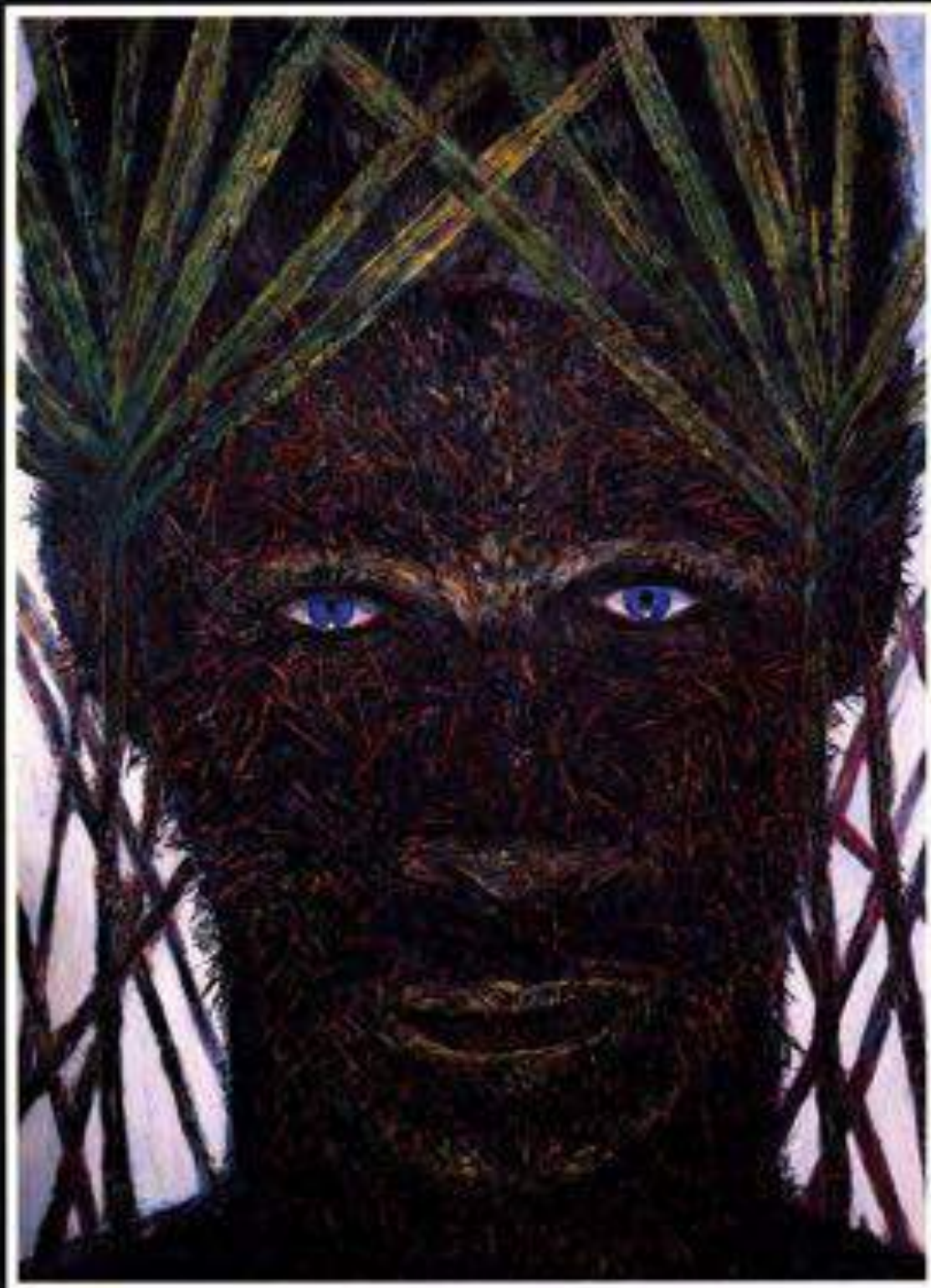
8' 11 7/8" x 59 1/4" (212.7 x 151.8 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Edith C. Blum Fund, 1990

Arnaldo Roche

LOS PRIMEROS DIEZ AÑOS



marco

ARTnews

course, one must eat." *The Triumph of Death* (1988) is an enormous—approximately 10 by 20 feet—apocalyptic vision of carved wooden soldiers, mythical figures—half man, half beast—and grief-stricken classical nudes set against a swirling sea of charcoal, fiery red, and gold, marked with tufts of black hair. "This vision of death is something sublime; it is pre-Hispanic. The dark images of death come from the European tradition. The festive images of death are Mexican. I am terrified of death, and I think the Mexican attitude of humor toward death masks our true feelings."

Following these death-inspired images, Venegas began his recent "Ahuahuaste Reliefs," encouraged by his Puebla friends, who gave him a huge ahahuaste tree to use for carving reliefs and for making new saints for their church. He created various assemblages of raw, twisted figures, scarcely painted in earth-toned washes against wooden backdrops. *Untitled* (1989) includes three Goyaesque phantoms: carved muscular forms whose arms shelter their faces. "In my wall reliefs," he explains, "I'm preoccupied with the pictorial space created by the sculptures. My intention is to give the illusion of both painting and sculpture so that my reliefs are



Venegas' *The Triumph of Death*, 1988. "This vision of death," the artist says, "is something sublime."

not definable as sculpture or as painting. I enhance this ambiguity by painting the wood and adding fibers, hair, and cloth. I will never make pure sculpture because, although I'm concerned with the medium, it's only from a pictorial viewpoint."

Venegas' works are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City, the National Institute of Fine Arts, the Televisa Cultural Foundation, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Monterrey. He's had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City, the Wenger Gallery in Los Angeles, the OMR Gallery in Mexico City, and currently at the Ramis Barquet Gallery in Monterrey.

Nevertheless, Venegas insists. "I'm not interested in exhibiting more right now. With my studio completed, I need to hide away, to look for the sensation of painting and its relation to my present life, not following a specific theme."

—Mary Schneider Enriquez

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PUERTO RICO Arnaldo Roche-Rabell



the artist as alchemist.

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell gets as close as he can to his subjects. He covers their bodies with canvas or paper and traces the contours with his hands. For long, concentrated stretches, he has a whole world in his hands. He is

He works by first applying thick layers of paint directly to the canvas and then placing the canvas on the model, who frequently is his mother, Maria.

He traces his use of frottage, a technique of rubbing, to the public school for the arts he attended in his native town of Santurce. He recalls how he covered himself with paint and rolled over the canvases. That act opened the door to a style that tends to force him back on himself. "I always come back to myself to see how I feel," he says.

This intense, personal approach to painting has put the 37-year-old artist in the foreground among contemporary Latino artists. Right now he is looking forward to the exhibition "Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century" at New York's Museum of Modern Art (June 5 through September 7) as one of two Puerto Rican artists represented in the show. The other is Juan Sanchez of Brooklyn.

As Roche-Rabell sees it, art liberates him sexually. His aim is seduction. "I'm not looking to prove who I am or what I am," he says forthrightly. "I always try to just find something to touch, something that tells me I'm still alive, that I can still move, that I can still change."

"In *Carving the Spirit of the Flesh* (1981), his self-searching teeters on the rarest edge of discovery and defacement," writes Gregory C. Knight in the catalogue for "Compulsive Acts," Roche-Rabell's 1984 show at the Ponce Museum of Art.

Roche-Rabell retreats into the contours of visions and dreams. The faces in *The Magic of the Island Man* (1981), for example, reflect the artist's descent into his own fire and brimstone. "My trip is not a mental one," he says. "The mental process is a device to understand the miracle that has already happened. I paint and I think. I move and see what I have done. I don't read much. I don't even like to be around other artists. This is a very selfish attitude, but I don't want to fight anybody else's battle."

Dressed in jeans and a polo shirt, Roche-Rabell relaxes in the elegant Galeria Botello on the second floor of Plaza Las Americas in San Juan, a grand shopping mall in the Caribbean.



Roche-Rabell, whose paintings reflect his anguished descent into his own fire and bitterness. **BELOW** *No solo de pan vive el hombre* (Man Doesn't Live by Bread Alone), 1992.

For the artist, who divides his time between Chicago and San Juan, the quiet gallery is his home away from home, and gallery director Maud Duquella is both his representative in Puerto Rico and acts as a kind of surrogate mother.

It is she who tells how, when the artist was a child, his brother, a brilliant engineer, accidentally shot and killed their sister, then gradually went mad and finally died. Roche-Rabell makes no mention of his tragedy. The past is dead, he says.

Beginning as an architecture student at the University of Puerto Rico, he decided to switch to painting. He yearned to "do theater, movies, performance, to paint. I wanted to do everything." And that desire led him to study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts and learned to speak English.

The Chicago art scene nurtured his imagery as he adopted the Neo-Expressionism then in vogue. In fact he credits Art Institute professors Robert Leescher, Ray Yoshida, and Richard Keane with helping him define his vision.

He is the island man, the dark countenance in his oil on canvas *Tu Hare ni Druan in Blue* (1986) that peers through the brush with sea-blue eyes and seems to dare the viewer to roam his gaze. The subject of self-discovery is the central theme he pursues in all of his self-portraits.

"His relentless examination of his psyche through many self-portraits, often superimposed upon portraits of his mother, leads to works of almost harrowing intensity," critic Lyone Warren pointed out in the catalogue for the 1989 show "Chicago Artists in the European Tradition" at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

"I don't want to control myself," the artist says. "At first it was an obsession. Maybe I developed so quickly in my art and talent because I knew I could paint whatever I could draw. Now, it's far beyond that. I want to convey things, to make things work on different levels."

Above all, the artist commands, he wants his paintings to speak his truth, but through the senses of the viewer. "If you think that I'm

doing something special or enlightening that has touched you in a personal way," he says, "that is what you should write about. It's so easy to say he's here, he's there, he's doing that. Do you feel enlightened? Did you learn something? Do you feel more human?"

His paintings are in many major collections, including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Puerto Rico, the Fundacion Cultural de Mexico, the Luis Mateo Marin Foundation in Rio Piedras, and the Luis A. Ferré Foundation in Ponce.

"An art such as that of Arnaldo Roche-Rabell's knows no frontiers," claimed Mexico's MARCO gallery director Fernando Treviño at the opening of Roche-Rabell's exhibition there earlier this year. "It aspires to take its message to all those spirits attuned to receive it."

"I'm as complicated as my images," the artist states, brushing back his thinning hair. "I have to do what I do to prove that I'm a mature person, that I can control these energies." Right now he is occupying a space as blank as a new canvas. "It's not a terrible feeling," he says. "I'm not afraid of the void, the loneliness. I don't have many preconceived notions, I know that things will appear, I'm fulfilled."

—Ened Rosillo-Gomez

Fritz Roth is a Canadian journalist living in Buenos Aires. *Robin Condit* is an ARTnews senior editor. *Juliana Sims* is a freelance writer living in Bogotá. *Jose M. Manes* is a free-lance writer living in Havana. *Mary Schneider Enriquez* is ARTnews' Mexico City correspondent. *Ened Rosillo-Gomez* is a senior reporter at the San Juan Star, specializing in art and culture.



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Arnaldo Roche Rabell at Galeria Alejandro Gallo, Mexico



11

PREVIEW



The Usumacoches, 1992, óleo sobre tela, 220 x 220 cm / 6.6 x 6.6 ft.

Arnaldo Roche Rabell en el MoMA

El pasado verano se presentó en el Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) de Nueva York, la exposición "Artistas Latinoamericanos del Siglo XX," curada por el Sr. Waldo Rasmussen, la cual había sido exhibida anteriormente en Sevilla, París y Colonia. Esta muestra constituyó un reconocimiento a los artistas más significativos de la plástica Latinoamericana.

En ella destacó la obra de Arnaldo Roche Rabell, quien junto a Juan Sánchez, fueron los únicos Puerorriqueños representados en el MoMA.

El arte pictórico de Roche Rabell reúne aspectos muy sobresalientes de la pintura joven de América Latina y en él distinguimos tres elementos importantes: el uso de la técnica del "frottage," la expresividad de sus personajes y el ambiente fantástico y onírico que envuelve sus cuadros.

Actualmente, algunas de las mejores piezas de Arnaldo Roche Rabell son exhibidas en la Galería Alejandro Gallo. La galería está localizada en Justo Sierra No 2150, Guadalajara 44600, México. Tels. (3) 615-1363 y 616-3547. Fax (3) 615-2927. En Nueva York (212) 750-5052.

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15 de febrero - 16 de abril de 1995



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is. Here as elsewhere in America, not only a question of how the artist is perceived by outsiders, but also of how he perceives himself.

In other regions of the world this is less self-evidently the case. New Zealand, for example, is an officially bi-racial and bi-cultural society, divided into Maori and not Maori, or *pakeha*. The Maori, occupiers of the land before the Europeans came, have successfully preserved a vigorous tribal culture, increasingly self-assertive in cultural terms, as well as in matters of more directly practical import, such as land rights, which have recently been pursued under the provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840). Art plays a prominent role in traditional Maori culture, but it is an art of decorative carving rather than of painting, or the production of independent sculptural objects. The main foci for the activity of traditional Maori carvers are the huge *waka*, or ceremonial canoes, which are the bearers of tribal identity, and *whare*, or meeting houses, elaborately decorated buildings which combine a social with a sacred function. *Whare*, in particular, continue to be built, so that there is a continuing outlet for the efforts of traditional carvers.

At the same time, however, Maori have begun to be absorbed into the essentially *pakeha* world of contemporary art. The senior figure in this cross-over process is Ralph Hotere. Hotere's work, though sometimes informed by specifically Maori concepts, remains firmly within the Western tradition, as in, for example, his ambitious *Arawauna* (Pl. 507), despite the presence of inscriptions in the Maori language.

Younger artists of Maori descent have transferred traditional Maori images, found in carving, to paintings in Western formats. This is the case with Robyn Kahukiwa's *Hiaeteinuiwe* (Pl. 506), where the central group of mother and child is influenced by the relief carvings one might find on a Maori *whare*. A further Maori element is added by the greenstone *tiki* or pendant the mother is wearing. The artist says that the painting 'is about recovering our spirituality - i.e. traditional Maori religion'. New Zealand artists of Maori descent have also made use of Maori symbols in quasi-abstract work, as happens in the work of Shane Cotton (Pl. 505). These paintings are much appreciated in New Zealand itself, and have attracted support from

507 **Robyn Kahukiwa** *Hiaeteinuiwe* (Pl. 506)
1986
Oil on canvas
100 x 100 cm (39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in)

506 **Ralph Hotere** *Arawauna* (Pl. 507)
1981
Oil on canvas
142 x 106 cm (56 x 42 in)

505 **Shane Cotton** *Untitled* (Pl. 505)
Oil on canvas, 1981
Dimensions: 112 x 100 cm (44 x 39 in)



En pintura, no hay edad para la maestría

LO QUE UN PINTOR, DE 18

plástica, para apuntarse como una relevante figura creativa de fin de siglo y, por supuesto, ocupar un puesto central en el arte del próximo siglo.

Los intencos, complejos y abigarrados cuadros recientes que exhibe en Eliza Fine Art, de Coral Gables, nada tienen que ver con la compleja, abigarrada y abisma pintura actual que nos asalta fuertemente por todas partes.

Esos lienzos escarman la respuesta y la permanencia del arte de nuestro tiempo. Sus realidades y contradicciones. Los ritmos de lo prestura y la oscuridad de su identidad. En la raíz de todas esas cantidades y como elemento activo de oscuridad: dubiohacia autoconciencia.

En Roche-Rabell, formado en las estrictas exigencias de la escuela de arte del Art Institute of Chicago, se da el caso de un creador que, a pesar de poseer un dominio exquisito de su oficio y de los complejos mecanismos del mundo del arte internacional —del que forma parte por derecho propio—, se mantiene minuciosamente fiel a sus raíces, a la bondad de sus orígenes, a los trabajos de su vida de emigrante. Todo que cuando lo ha volcado creativamente en su pintura.

En la obra de este artista, el valor de la imagen por sí misma, se integra sin fisuras en el superlativo de la imagen como experiencia, espasmo, espejismo y, hasta si se quiere, ritual religioso.

Roche-Rabell es un artista que busca cruda y angustiosamente la comunicación con el otro; que intenta crear vínculos reparadores, que descarta los empujones de las cosas y la conciencia para revelar sus esencia últimas.

En esa aventura hay Dürer, el arte, porque, utilización del cuerpo como diorama, surrealismo, expresionismo y vanguardia.

"Arnaldo Roche", afirma el distinguido historiador de arte Edward J. Sullivan, "ha demostrado brillantemente en su obra las exigencias de la vanguardia internacional con la

necesidad de dar expresión visual a las realidades y necesidades de su ciencia sociológica y personalidad artística, así como a los hechos e ilusiones de su realidad como pinto puertorriqueño".

Mostró *Let Her Love* es un cuadro que ilustra perfectamente las insondables fuerzas intelectuales, emocionales y creativas del artista.

Figura una mujer de coloración. En su peso, que puede ser un cuerpo, vemos desprenderse la cabeza aullante del piano. Un poco más arriba, como en una bandeja que levanta en alto los brazos de la preta-cuerpo, aparece, también aullante, la cabeza de su madre. En ella, un detalle intrigante: está cubierto por una suerte de corona que recuerda a la de la Estatua de la Libertad. Se copia la cabeza materna en *San Nicolás* y en *San y God Told Me To Give Birth*.

"Uno de los modelos que Roche emplea con frecuencia para su arte, es su propia madre. Su figura, así como su espíritu, perviven la obra del pintor", dice Sullivan. "La intensa relación entre madre e hijo es reconocida y señalada en las imágenes que crea de ella literalmente con sus manos".

"Esto es un acto de creación a la inversa", prosigue diciendo el historiador y crítico. "En la imaginación artística de Roche la madre emerge como progenitora de la voluntad física del hijo. La cruz de tal manera que se conforma a sus cánones estéticos. En algunas de sus composiciones incluso reemplaza su propia cabeza por la de su madre".

Punto tan común como familiar. Roche-Rabell cala naturalmente el profundo carácter existencial de su pintura, con la reflexión sobre su identidad nacional.

Lo hace —más allá de lo formal y de los subterfios y manidos códigos de un total lenguaje que incluye culpablemente a la genética actual— a partir de su experiencia de hombre paribello, cuyos años se han dividido entre su existencia en su país natal y sus años en Estados Unidos. En su reflexión alcanza una

verdina dimensión en el bazo *Shut Up And Drink*. Esta gran pintura es una obra maestra de desgarrados ambivalencia.

En el ordenamiento de su espacio pictórico, Roche-Rabell recorre —apelando a dos representaciones arquitectónicas y escultóricas del implacable catálago de la intolerancia— al hombre rubio y al hombre negro o mestizo. Negro soy su Adán y rubio su Eva, coronados con fidelidad a los esquemas modernos de Lucien Cranch.

Así, el pintor plantea la imponderable pregunta: ¿qué hay más allá de esas antinómicas contrarios? Así, testimonia, demasiada realidad fue y es imposible y monstruosa.

"Como la crítica Marina Benítez ha indicado, los artistas puertorriqueños han estado partidos entre su deseo de lograr una forma nacional de expresión y su abrumadora atracción hacia las modas de la metrópoli", dice Sullivan. "Roche se ha apropiado de elementos de un neo expresionismo internacional y los ha transformado e inventado con el objeto de evocar el aura peculiar y más característica de su país, así como de sugerir muchos de los problemas y dilemas más palpables con los que cada ciudadano debe necesariamente involucrarse".

La exploración de la pintura de Roche-Rabell parece no tener fin. Porque como la de su contemporáneo dominicano Dionisio Blanco, no parte de lo convencional, sino del indeterminado en lo esencial. Una esencialidad que nada oculta, y deja a lo que selecciona y elabora de un valor inédito, de una gravitación genética. Es arte de fundación y oposición. Es arte de los años, de los años, de los años.

En estas cuadros formalismos y firmemente arrojados, donde las furias del agresivo amarillo —el único color con el que no pueden correrse los riesgos del exceso para muchos, el color de la oscura— son tejido básico, hay muchos detalles secretos.

Entre ellos —con una función ritualística—, el de la renovación de rituales, como en otras ocasiones del expiator, fue

hojas, las hojas, las líneas enroscadas en espirales, repetición y es cobocón.

Así, las líneas que integran *Can't Know How We'll Get It*. El negro central y dominante del lienzo es el intrincado amarillo de esas líneas. Sólo se interrumpen para que, en primer plano y colocado en oscuridad, se empine un hombre — ¿otra vez el artista? —, como clamando como a fuerzas superiores. Un detalle clave de esta pieza. En el centro de la línea de ese rostro inmensa, hay, tan así visible y como un tercer ojo, una bandera norteamericana.

La restauración en la obra de Roche-Rabell nos lleva a la ardua reconsideración de su religiosidad. Porque la eficacia del ceremonial religioso se construye y se consolida tradicionalmente a partir del crecimiento repetitivo del nombre, el signo y la fórmula que excitaban a la divinidad, y es conducen a las gracias de sus ritos.

Para la religiosidad del artista no es la religiosidad espontánea, oportuna, subterfio y falta del poder "color local" *lullaby* o *lullaby*, que profiera en tanto "arte" actual, como necura para llamar la atención.

Es, por el contrario, una religiosidad llena de tensiones y, por lo tanto, auténtica. Tiene tanto de aceptación como de rechazo de cualquier cosa de artificialidad, de desgarramiento, como de posibilidad espontánea. Obviamente, esa religiosidad es también comunión, compasión y contacto humanístico. Rango emocional a la naturaleza de ese arte.

No es nada fácil de aceptar la pintura de Roche-Rabell. Es inevitable asombrado. Debe celebrarse. Cruda, violenta e implacable es, también, reverso de esas cualidades. Conviene recordar que fue en la esencia del



'God Told Me To Give Birth', del pintor puertorriqueño Arnaldo Roche-Rabell.

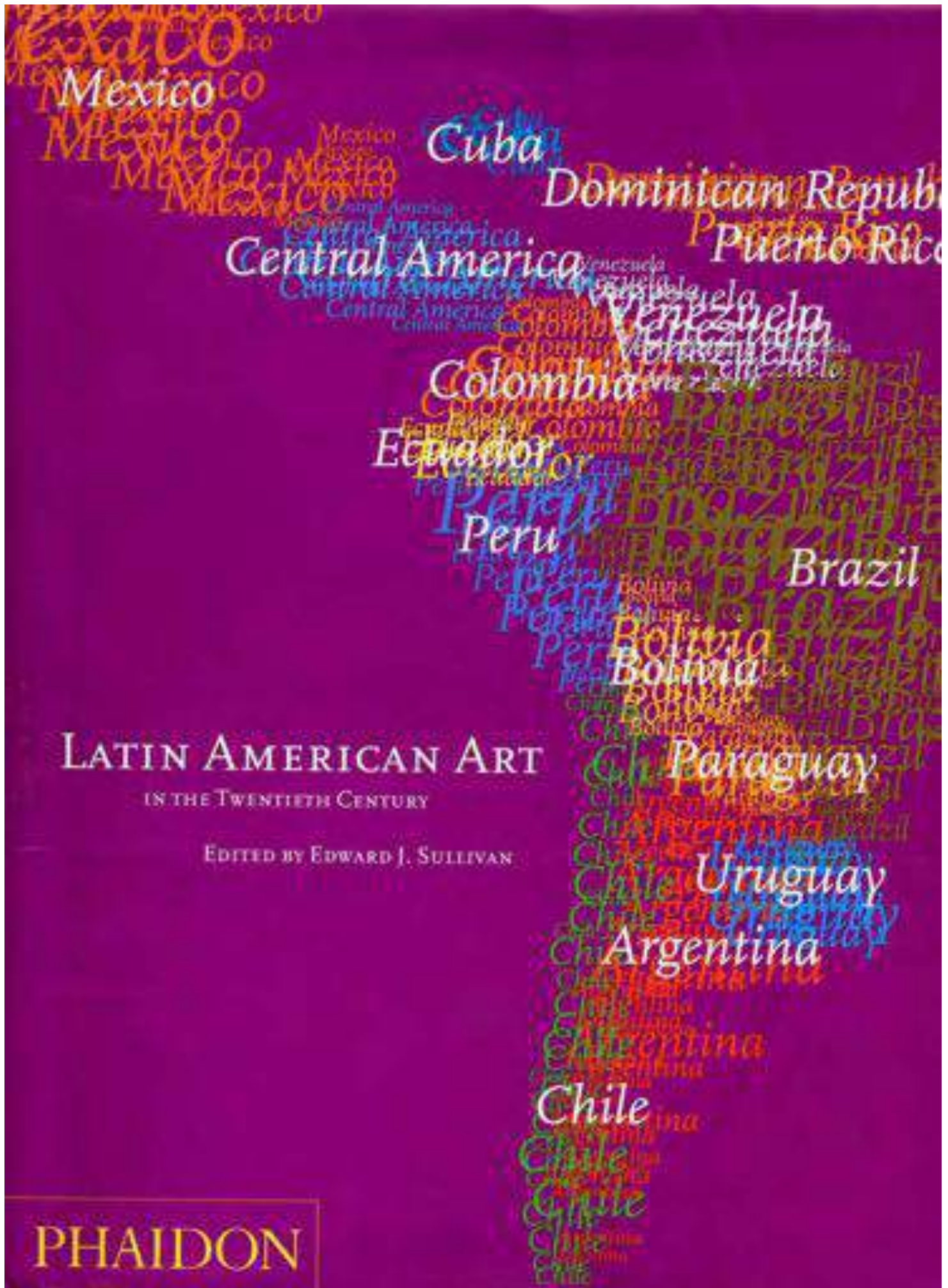
arte verdadero.

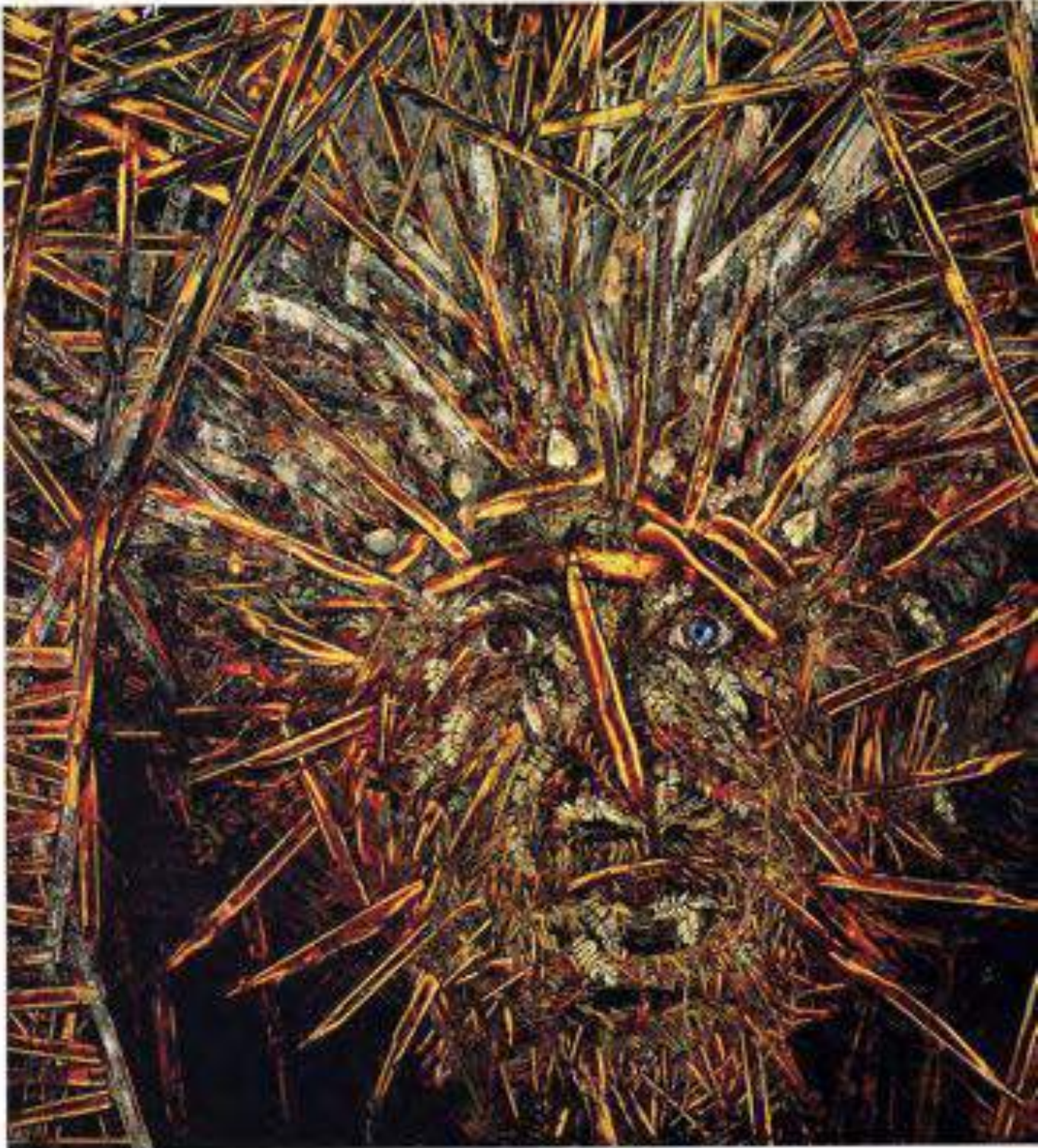
Todo lo demás es banalidad, vulgaridad, ignorancia, venta y compra de «originales» y «falsos» postizos y paragonados; intenciones de una crítica sin convicciones, rigor e integridad; y de calidades canónicas de producción con intereses económicos.

¿Pintura de fin de siglo? ¿Pintura definitiva hacia ese nuevo siglo al que nos precipitamos con tanta

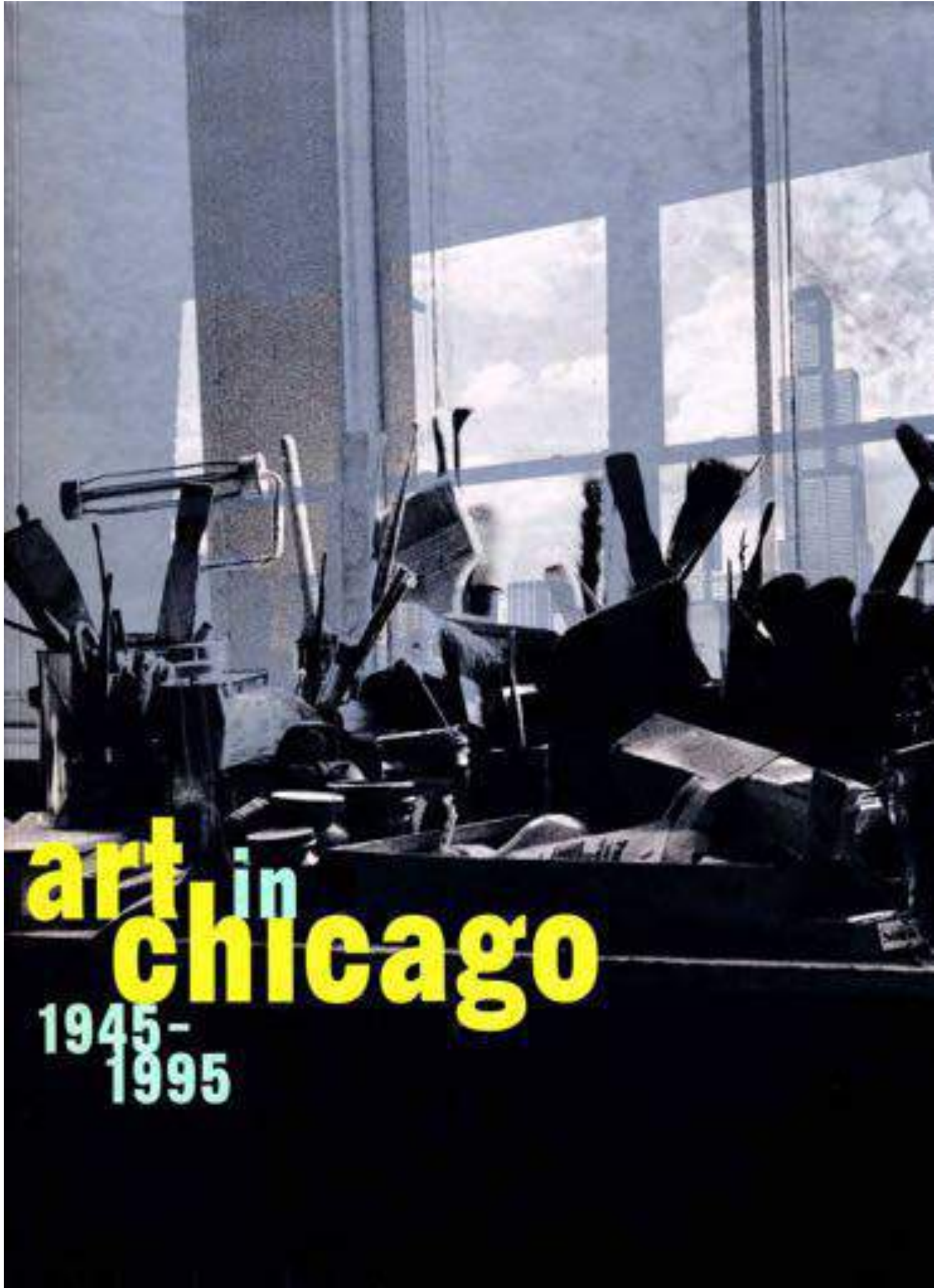
confusión como libertacional? Bien trágico, más poco. La era exclusiva solitaria de lo real y lo grande, la de los jóvenes maristas que es Arnaldo Roche-Rabell. No hay edad para la maestría.

La exposición de obras recientes de Arnaldo Roche-Rabell puede verse en Eliza Fine Art, 1149 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Coral Gables. Horario: lunes a viernes, de 11 a.m. a 6 p.m.





114. FERNANDO BOTERO, *1949 y Triste de una Noche*, 1999, oil on canvas, 245.1 x 342.5 cm, The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC



art in
chicago
1945-
1995

Thomas and
Hudson
Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

art in chicago

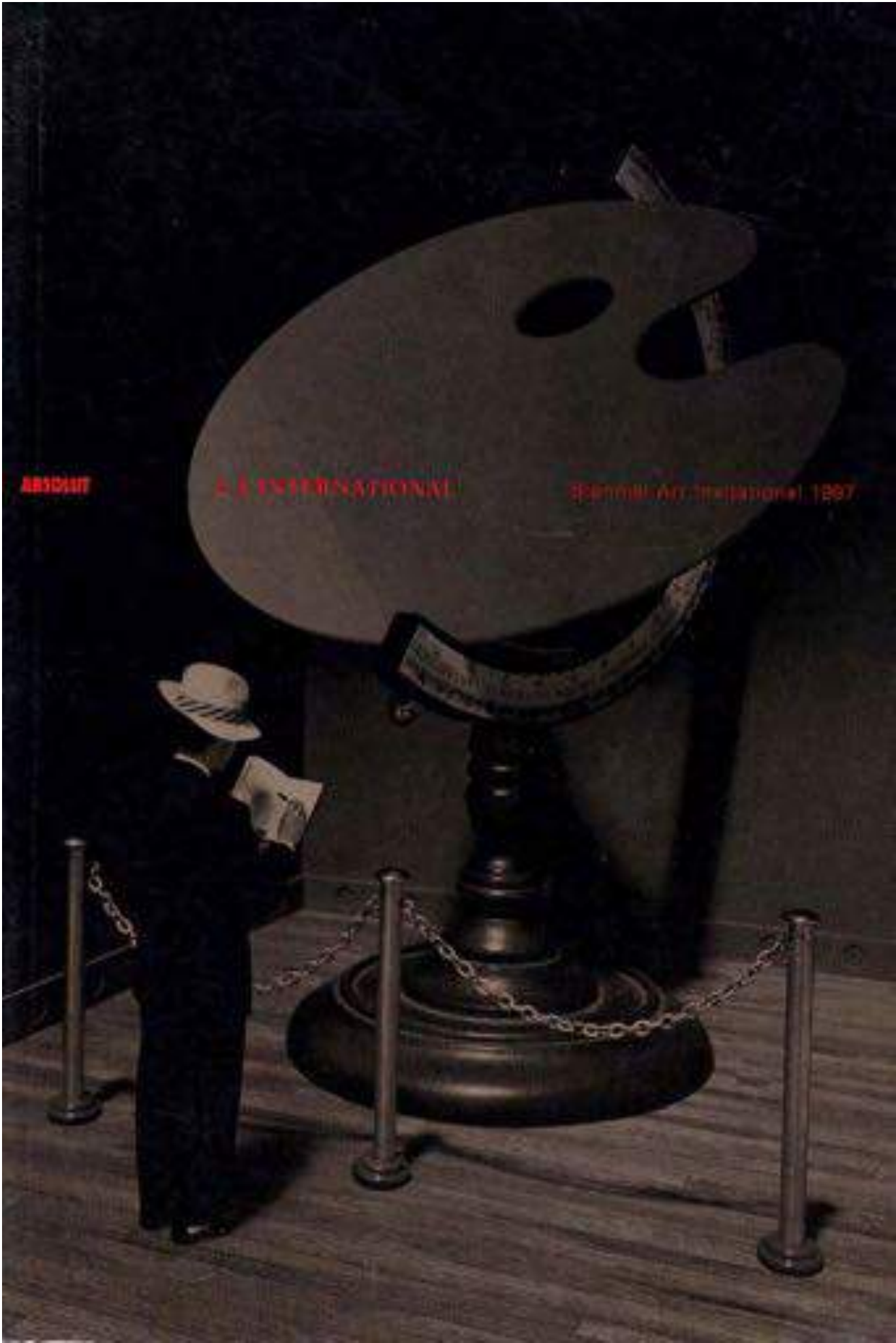
1945-
1995

Organized by
Lyons Warren

Essays by
Jeff Abell
Dennis Adrian
Staci Boris
John Covatta
Kate Harshfeld

Barbara Jaffee
Judith Rassi Kirshner
Carmela Rago
Franz Schulze
Peter Sels
Bill Starnes
and Lyons Warren

With contributions
from
Monique Meloche
and Dennis Nolan





Galleries and Works

in alphabetical order



X^èm^eX

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ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL • YO NO QUIERO MORIR... (Óleo) • Sobre tela • 178 cm x 178 cm • 1998

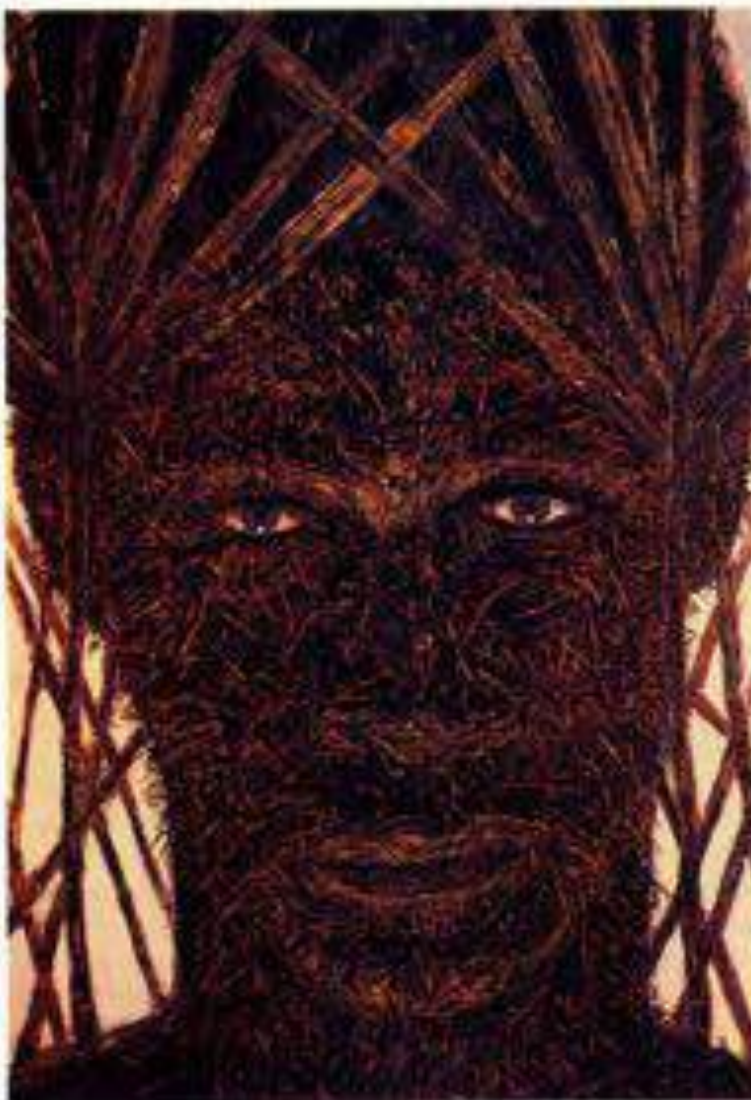
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THE NEW IMMIGRANTS:
Neither Here Nor There



the Spaniards' destruction of the indigenous Taino population with that of America's century-old economic domination of the island. He quotes an *American Express* ad boasting that the United States has "Puerto Rico in the palm of its hand" (figure 7). The artist also adds scathing personal testimonials of injustice and racial discrimination borne by himself and his family.

During the 1980s and 1990s, self-portraiture — perhaps the most personal of artistic strategies — emerged as an important tool for Latino artists striving to recover cultural memory and identity. Arnaldo Roche, Luis Cruz Azarita, and Marina González (figures 8–10) were among the many artists who used self-images to represent the collective identity of their ethnic, cultural, or racial group. The power of their work was broadened by reference to a collective injustice or stereotype suffered by the group.

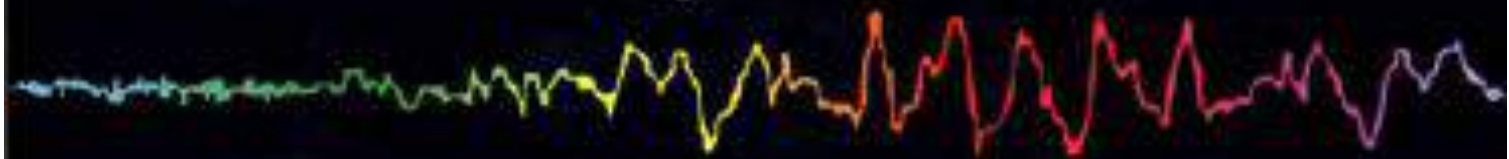
Antonio Martorell, a globally-minded yet locally-committed artist, offers yet another strategy, best described by Tomás Ybarra-Fraustó's wonderful phrase "glocal." This strategy involves starting with the reality that is closest and best known to the artist; over time, if the projection is genuine, it will achieve a global dimension. At the Whitney Biennial in 1995, Martorell showed "drifting" global maps that blurred and challenged world borders. They were made of movable lace and crafted by skilled women in Puerto Rico with whom the artist has collaborated for years.

Martorell created a major installation at El Museo del Barrio in 1993. It was called the *House in Mid-Air* and was inspired by "The Airbus," an influential essay by Puerto Rican

(Top) Figure 7. *Blending Reality: An Estancia*, 1988. Juan Sánchez, oil on laser print, mixed media on canvas. (Bottom) Figure 8. *You Have to Dream in Blue*, 1986. Arnaldo Roche Rabell, oil on canvas.



Dreams 1900–2000



*Science,
Art,
and the
Unconscious
Mind*

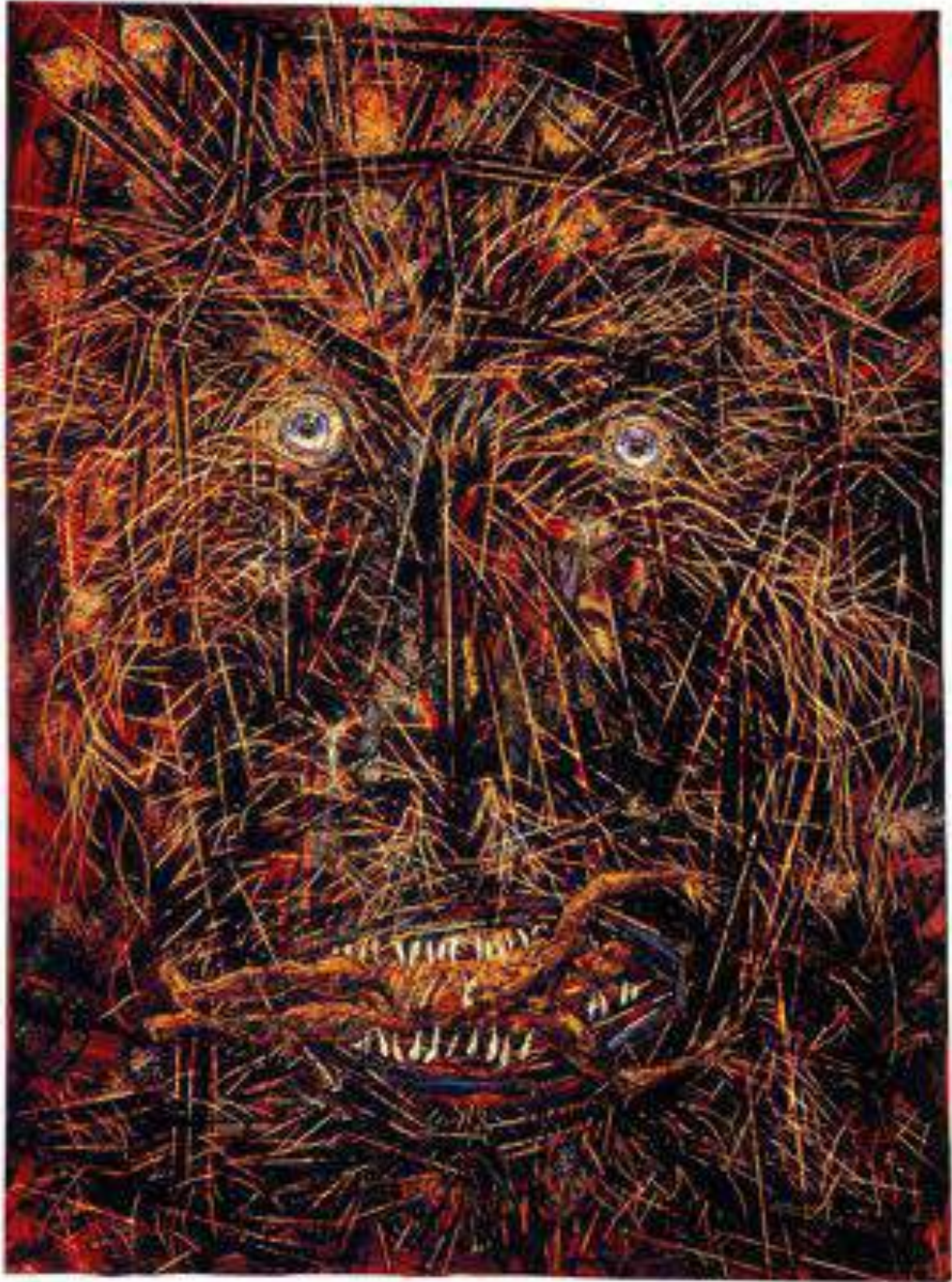
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Dreams 1900–2000

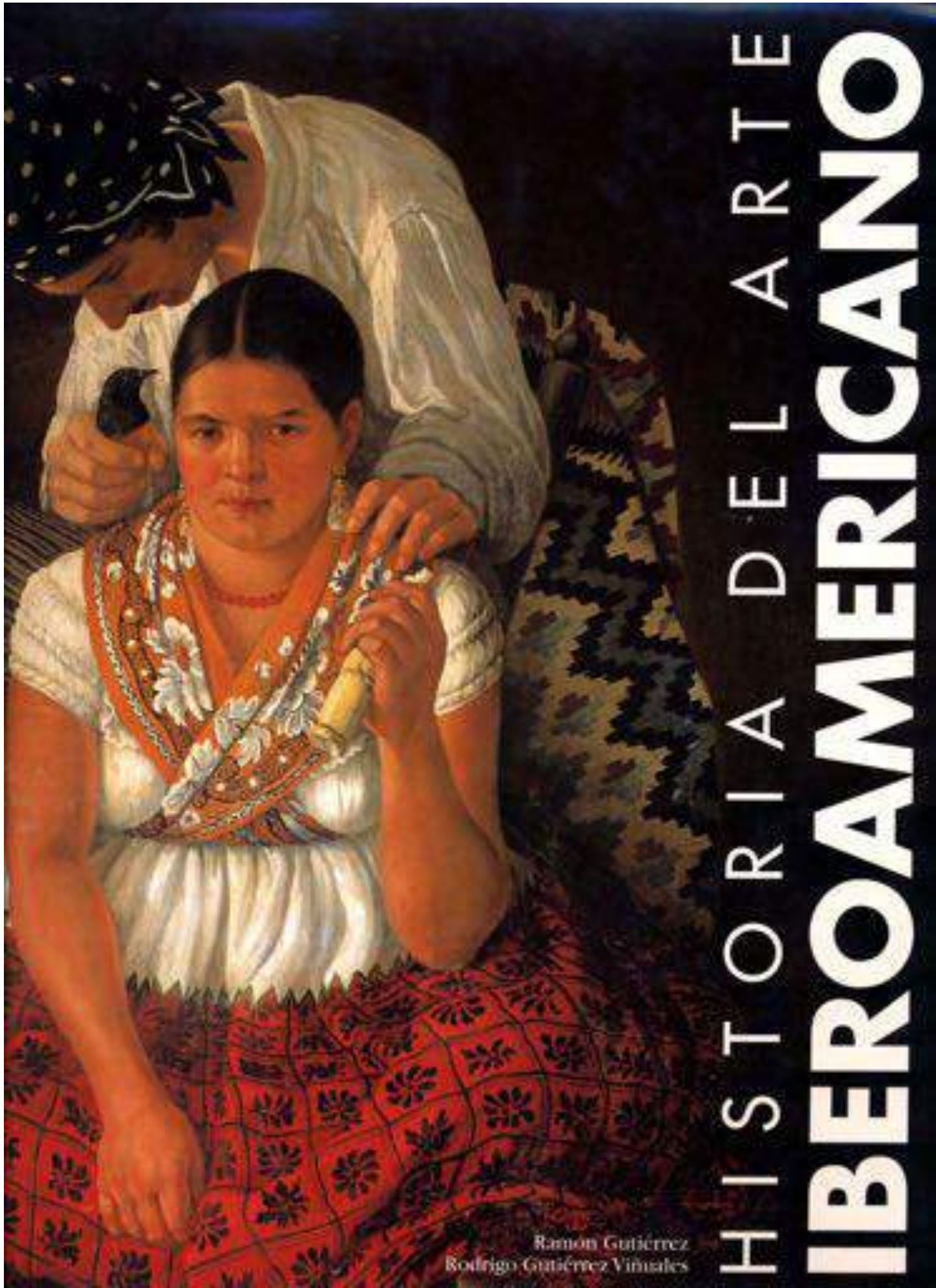
Science,
Art,
and the
Unconscious Mind

edited by
LYNN GAMWELL

Cornell University Press
Binghamton University Art Museum
State University of New York



PL 39
ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL (b. 1935), American
The Subconscious Always, 1981, oil on canvas, 82 x 60 in.
(2014.4.153.4) (PG) Courtesy George Adams Gallery, New York.



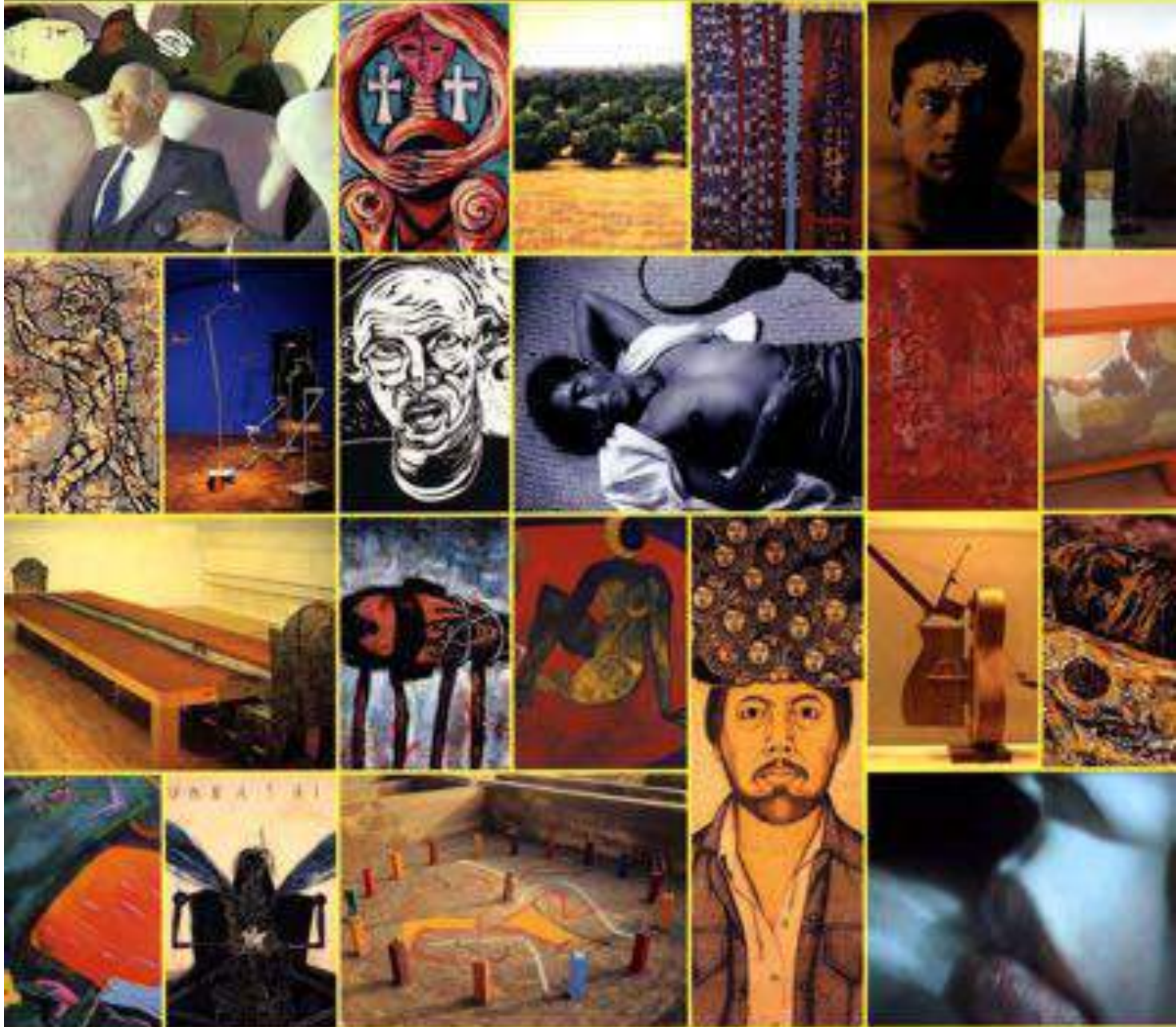
Ramón Gutiérrez
Rodrigo Gutiérrez Vizuales

HISTORIA DEL ARTE IBEROAMERICANO



ARTE DE AMÉRICA LATINA

1981-2000



GERMÁN RUBIANO CABALLERO



• **ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL**
 (PUERTO RICO) WILL WE F WE ARE
 NOT FEELING A DEAD HORSE •
 (DIEB I NO ESTAMOS ALMENTAN-
 DO UN CABALLO MUERTO), 1995 •
 OIL ON CANVAS • 91.8 X 122.9
 CM • FOTO CORRESA DE GALERIA
 ROTULO SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO

ciones y las video-instalaciones. Sin embargo no faltan otras propuestas como los performances y el land art. En muchos de estos trabajos se detecta un interés por la reflexión sobre la historia social, la cultura en cuanto memoria y el yo íntimo del artista.

La pintura tuvo como punto de partida al arte europeo de fines de los setenta y comienzos de los ochenta, que se caracterizó por el retorno de los cuadros de caballete, muchas veces de gran formato y de cuño expresionista. Este neoexpresionismo tuvo su primera aparición internacional en la exposición "Zeigrist" realizada en Berlín en 1982, que contó, además, con una participación numerosa y de varios países, incluyendo a los Estados Unidos. La muestra dejó en claro que, con pocas excepciones, se había vuelto a un arte figurativo-emocional, más apasionado y brutal, con entronques en el expresionismo de principios del siglo XX, y vinculados a la nueva objetividad, la nueva figuración y las obras de artistas interesados por manifestaciones no "cultas" o francamente crudas. Entre los numerosos artistas latinoamericanos que se conectaron con el neoexpresionismo se pueden mencionar los nombres de: Arturo Martí y Germán Venegas de México; Luis Cruz Azaceta de Cuba -radicado en Estados Unidos-; Arnaldo Roche Rabell de Puerto Rico; Lorenzo Jaramillo de Colombia; Octavio Russo de Venezuela; Sironi Franco, Alex Vallauri y Luis Zerbini del Brasil; Armando Rearte, Ana Eckell y Guillermo Kuitca de Argentina; Jorge Taca de Chile y Marcelo Aguirre de Ecuador, entre otros.

Reading & Teaching the POSTCOLONIAL



FROM BALDWIN TO
BASQUIAT AND BEYOND

Greg Dimitriadis/Cameron McCarthy
foreword by Maxine Greene

Reading and Teaching the Postcolonial

FROM BALDWIN TO
BASQUIAT AND BEYOND

GREG DIMITRIADIS
CAMERON McCARTHY

Foreword by
Maxine Greene



Teachers College, Columbia University
New York and London

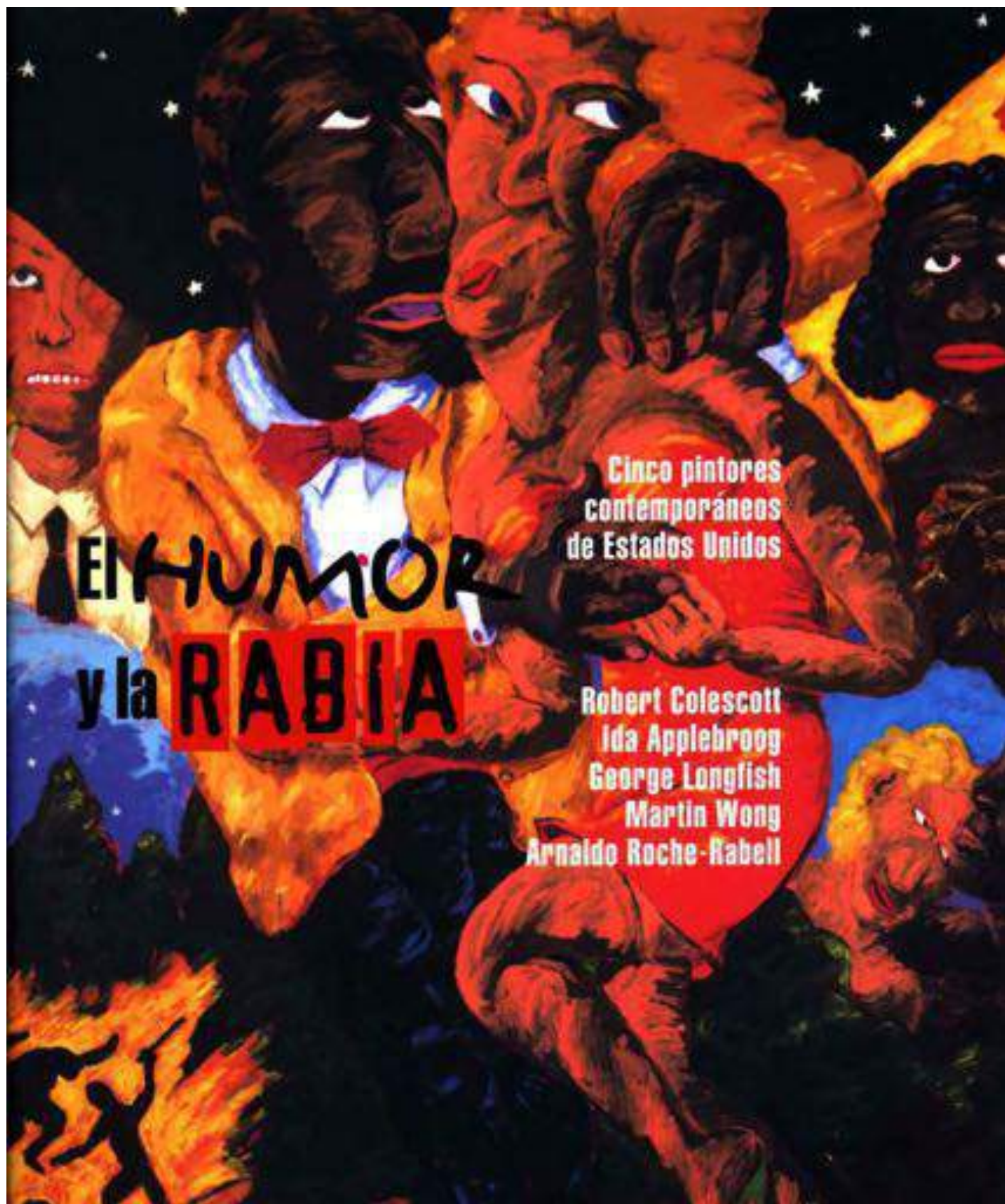
Three Postcolonial Painters

The Pedagogies of Bennett, Roche-Rabell, and Basquiat

We have argued throughout this book that the boundaries between different art forms are illusions maintained by institutional imperatives and belied by the work of artists in practice. In this chapter, we turn our gaze to the visual art and the work of three postcolonial artists who are dispersed geographically and culturally, but united in their approaches to the colonial inheritance they have all been bequeathed. In turning to visual art, we challenge the dominance of literature in the academy today, realized in the unfortunate conflation of postcolonial theory and literary criticism. In this chapter and the next, we turn to nonnarrative and nonverbal ways of knowing, in an attempt to broaden debates around postcolonial and multicultural theory and to bring a larger set of resources to educators wrestling with questions about identity and culture.

We focus, specifically, on the work of Gordon Bennett, a Euro-Aboriginal painter from Australia; Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, an Afro-Latin painter from Puerto Rico; and finally Haitian-Puerto Rican—American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. All three artists mine the energy and complexity of identity formation for marginalized subjects in the Third World and on the periphery of the first. All three draw on the specific experiences, traditions, and histories of marginalized and oppressed groups. Yet they resist the temptation to posit linear, unitary, or homogenous notions of culture in opposition to the dominant colonial system. All three refuse to invest the dichotomy between colonizer and colonized with any kind of stability or immutability. These artists are not “folk artists.” They make more fundamental kinds of demands that extend beyond questions of validation or inclusion.

The work of these artists offers resources for educators struggling with how to address questions of identity and culture in classrooms, challenging the ready-made efforts of so many multiculturalists. As we noted



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Ernesto Berra/ Argentina

Mariana Jensen/ Chile

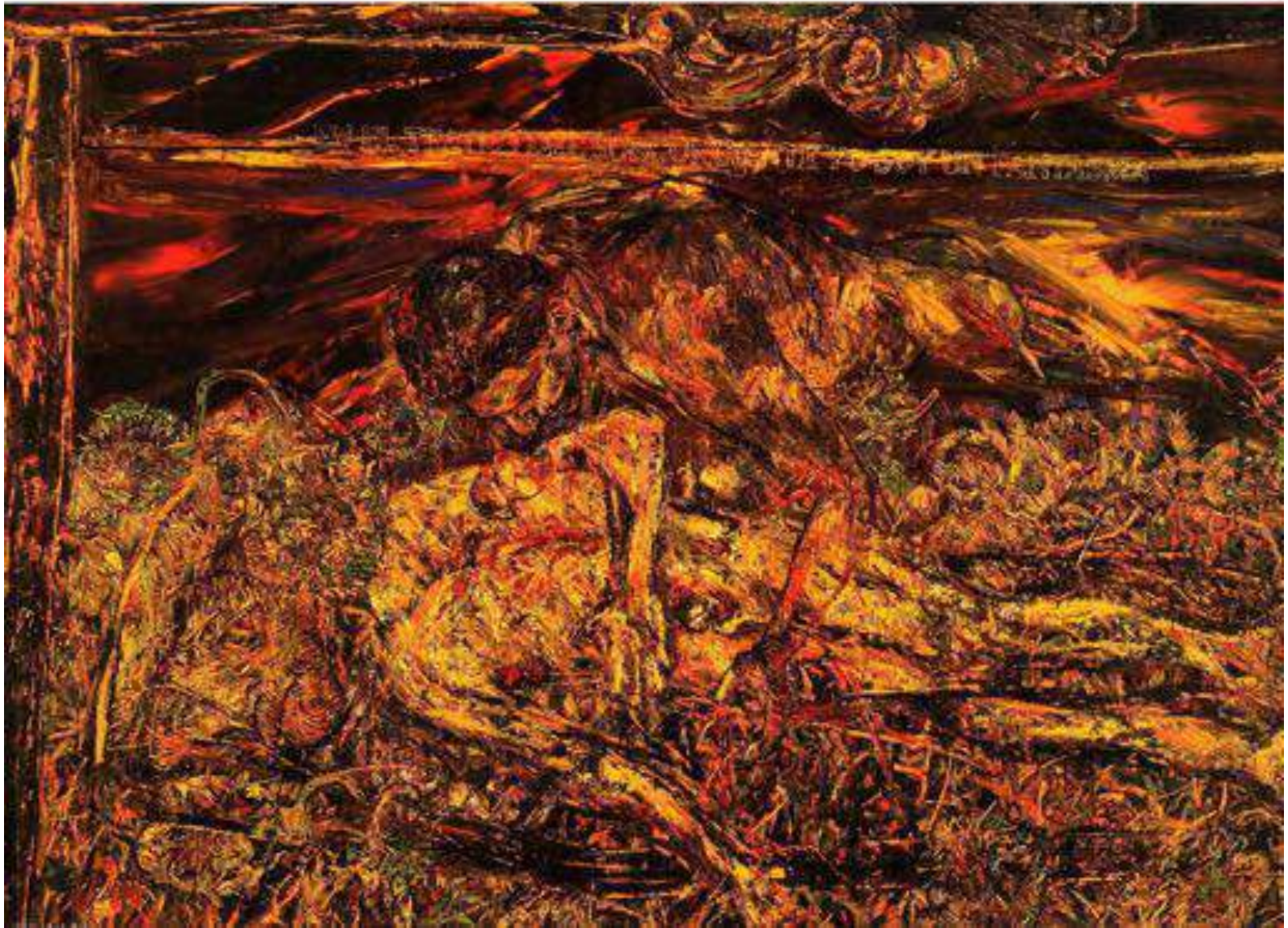
and 40 Latin American
artists



International Magazine of Latin American Fine Art

SOUTHWARD ART

L A T I N A M E R I C A N A R T R E V I E W



The Enigmas of Brotherhood:
Roche on Van Gogh

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

PARADISE LOST?

Aspects of Landscape in Latin American Art



PARADISE LOST?
Aspects of Landscape in Latin American Art

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The Most Erotic Artworks ■ Explicit Art: Who's Making It, Who's Showing It, Who's Buying It ■ What Still Has the Power to Shock? ■ Lisa Yuskavage ■ Bonnard ■ Cindy Sherman ■ Boucher ■ Correggio ■ Nan Goldin ■ Bernini ■ Mapplethorpe ■ Modigliani ■ Eric Fischl and Much More



and in arousing the viewer in a fairly sexual way—whatever that means. Unless it's the latter or unless it's both, it's probably not terribly interesting. At the present time, there's a fair amount of erotic depiction but not a lot of erotic arousal.

Robert Mapplethorpe wanted, as he put it, to play with the edge, to try to create images that were esthetic and erotic at the same time instead of simply depicting erotic things. He may have been fairly excited, and he had in mind a class of viewers who would be excited, but a lot of people found the works repellent. You're getting a very vivid sense of otherness when you look at some of Mapplethorpe's images. That may be inseparable from the idea of eroticism—that it's not universal.

■ **ARIAN ZUGAZAGOTIA**, director, El Museo del Barrio, New York

You can see phallic representations in most aesthetic cultures, in Greece, in South America. Obviously, we're talking about the forces of life and how you interpret them. There, you cannot call it pornography or erotic. But it is the motor of life and one of the essences of art as an expression. It is latent in any work you see.

Courbet's *The Origin of the World* (1866) is the most blunt, in-your-face expression of a vision that, today, photog-



Gustave Courbet, *The Origin of the World*, 1866.

raphy might deliver. When it was originally exhibited, it was covered with a sheet. You had to open it up, like a peep show. Even the title is the primal thing—connecting with nature, instinct, desire.

The other work I also find fantastic—and which is in a way the model for much contemporary art—is **Duchamp's *Étant Donnés*** (1946–66). Again, it's the spectator as voyeur. It's inviting you and excluding you at the same time.

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell's *Peek-A-Boo* (1991). From a distance you think it is a big face, a poignant portrait. But if you look closely, you see that the eyes and cheeks are really two naked men, one black, one white; the hands where they come together are the nose. It is in a way a portrait of sexuality and of the color question—an image that is both monumental and hiding. On the one side it's trying to talk openly about homosexuality, and yet you have to discover it within yourself. I think it's at once a representation of hidden eroticism and explicitness. In Latin American art there's a tension between depicting overt sensuality and at the same time trying to hide it.

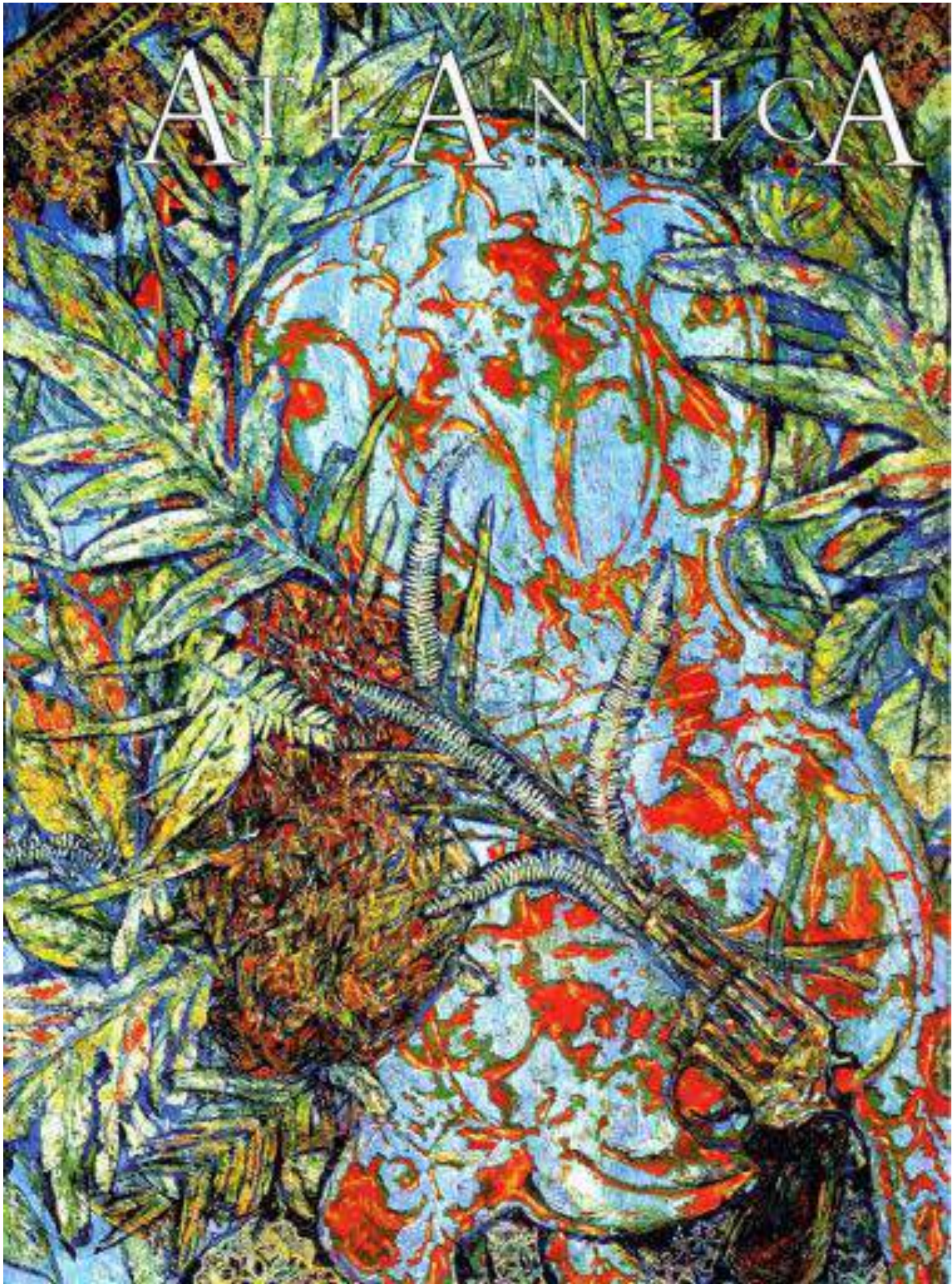


Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, *Peek-A-Boo*, 1991.

■ **YISHAKHA N. DESAI**, director, The Asia Society, New York
Lovers at the Cleveland Museum of Art. It's an eleventh-century sculpture of a male and female in an embrace, with the



Lovers (Mithuna), 11th century, Madhya Pradesh, India.



PAINTING: SURVIVING INSANITY

PINTURA

SOBREVIVIENDO LA DEMENCIA

ARNALDO ROCHE

Este grupo de pinturas forma parte del desarrollo de ideas alrededor de *Fraternos: Vincent, el Puente entre mi Hermano y Yo*, ejecutadas entre los años 2002-2003.

Después de los sucesos del 11 de septiembre contemplaba buscar una manera de recoger a través de la pintura el arduo proceso humano de resignación y restauración. Documentar destrucción y tragedia puede ser hecho de mil maneras. Como esos recuentos noticiosos que nos hacen revivir la misma tragedia una y otra vez. Como una buena instalación de museo que nos puede convencer al acudir nuestra memoria. Recoger en imágenes cómo los afectados por el mismo evento sobreviven a la tragedia no sería tarea fácil. Toma más tiempo reconstruirse emocionalmente que los segundos que toma el evento catastrófico en ocurrir. La muerte no anunciada no se entiende y no se puede justificar, haciendo muy duro el proceso de recuperación. Continuamos viviendo en pedazos. Reviviendo la tragedia entre recuentos de lo perdido y la fabricación de fantasías de lo que pudo haber sido y no es. Esta serie de pinturas apuntan a esas etapas emocionales donde la mente fabrica innumerables imágenes como alternativas para sentir y sobrevivir. No se convierten estas imágenes en meros ejercicios de creatividad fantasiosa. La fibra de este collage está basada en sucesos y alternativas reales de lo que pudimos haber hecho o estaríamos dispuestos a hacer para alterar estos sucesos. Abrazar, sostener y hasta proteger lo que nos queda sería parte de estas imágenes. Otra podría ser el acto de fe con el que nos consolamos al pensar que lo perdido será recuperado al otro lado de la muerte.

¿Qué posibilidades tendrá en estos tiempos una pintura que encierre lo que ardientemente deseamos; ese sueño que se convierte en nuestra identidad; ese margen de nuestra realidad que nos permite continuar viviendo y funcionando normalmente; estas ideas que nos permiten terminar el día como héroes? Creo que en estas imágenes estaría en juego la honestidad. Admiro el arte de los mentalmente desequilibrados pero me canso de imágenes alucinatorias de artistas que posan con el juego de la percepción. Revisito meteme en un museo para que me recuerden que seguimos

This group of paintings forms part of the development of ideas revolving around *Fraternos: Vincent, el Puente entre mi Hermano y Yo*, executed during 2002 and 2003.

After the events of September 11, I contemplated the idea of seeking a way of using painting to reflect the arduous human process of resignation and recovery. There are a thousand ways of documenting destruction and tragedy. Like statistics in the news, forcing us to relive tragedy over and over again. Like a good museum installation that succeeds in shaking our memory and stirring our soul. It would be no mean task to create images of how the event's victims are surviving the tragedy. Emotional recovery takes longer than the catastrophic event in itself, which is over in a matter of seconds. Unannounced death can be neither understood nor justified, making recovery a painful process. We go on living in bits and pieces, reliving the tragedy in terms of statistics of what has been lost and the invention of fantasies of what could have been but is not.

The series of paintings addresses these emotional stages, where the mind produces countless images as alternative ways of healing and surviving. The images do not become mere exercises in fanciful creativity. The collage's fiber is based on events and real alternatives as to what we could have done or would be willing to do to change the course of those events. To embrace, hold and even protect what we have left would be part of the images. Another part might be an act of faith in which solace is found by thinking that what has been lost will be recovered on the other side of death.

In times such as these, what possibilities are there for painting that encloses the things we so fervently desire; the dream which becomes our identity; the margin of our reality which enables us to go on living and functioning in a normal manner; the ideas which enable us to end the day like heroes?

To my mind, in these images, honesty may be at stake. I admire the art of the mentally unbalanced but I tire of the hallucinatory images of artists who make a pose out of the game of perception. When visiting a museum, I resent being

CV

ARNALDO ROCHE RABELL

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1955

Academic Background**1984**

MFA, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1982

BFA, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

1974-78

Studies in Architecture, UPR, Puerto Rico

Awards and Grants**2006**

The Best Museum Solo Show Award, Asociación Internacional de Críticos de Arte, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Award Winner of AICA Special Prize, San Juan, Puerto Rico

1998

Award Winner, Primera Bienal Internacional, Cumaná, Venezuela

1991

Award in the Visual Arts 10

1989

Painting Prize, Segunda Bienal Internacional de Pintura, Cuenca, Ecuador

1982

James Nelson Raymond Traveling Fellowship, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

1981

Lincoln Award, Illinois State Government

Selected Solo Shows**2013**

Recent Works, Walter Otero Contemporary Art San Juan, Puerto Rico

2010-11

Bayamon Museum of Art, Bayamon, PR.

2009

Azul/ Blue, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2009-08

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Museum of Latin American Art MOLAA, Long Beach, California

2008

Recent Works, Spinnerei, Leipzig, Germany

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, J. Johnson Gallery, Jacksonville, Florida

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, Illinois

2007

Arnaldo Roche: New Work, Bernice Steinbaum Gallery, Miami, Florida

2006

Obra reciente, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Panamá

2005

Obra reciente, Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

2004

At the Edge of Religion, Walter Otero Gallery, Puerto Rico

2003

Cain: The Stolen Landscape, Iturralde Gallery, Los Angeles, California

2003

Fraternos, Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico

2002

Fraternos, Museo de las Américas, San Juan, Puerto Rico

1998

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela

1996

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell -The Uncommonwealth, Anderson Gallery, Virginia, Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia

Museum of American Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Pennsylvania
Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, Nevada/ Kranner Art Museum, University of Illinois Urbana, Chicago

Face to Face, George Adams Gallery, New York, New York

1995

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Museo de Arte Moderno, México D.F., México

1994

Fuegos, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico

The Legacy, Frumkin / Adams Gallery, New York, New York

1993

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Monterrey, México

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell: Recent Works, Frumkin / Adams Gallery, New York

1992

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Chicago International Art Exposition, Chicago, Illinois

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Galería Alejandro Gallo, México, D.F., México

1991

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Frumkin / Adams Gallery, New York, New York

Arnaldo Roche-Rabell, Lisa Sette Gallery, Scottsdale, Arizona

Frenetic Dreams, Organization of American States, Washington, D.C.

1990

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Frumkin / Adams Gallery, New York, New York

1989

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Galería Botello, San Juan, Puerto Rico

The Art of Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Struve Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1988

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, St. Louis Gallery of Contemporary Art, Saint Louis, Missouri

1986

Eventos, milagros y visiones, Museo de Historia, Antropología y Arte,

Universidad de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico

1984

Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Ponce Museum of Art , Ponce, Puerto Rico

Selected Group Show

2013

Pinta 13

Chaco 13

2012-13

Caribbean: Crossroads of the World

Puerto Rico.. Puertas al paisaje, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2010-09

Paint Made Flesh, Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville, Tennessee

The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C./ The Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, N.Y.

2008

Visiones: 20th Century Latin Art, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Florida

2007

Selection of the Permanent Collection, Nassau County Museum, New York

2005-06

Portrait, El Museo del Barrio, New York/ San Diego Museum of Art, California/ Bass Museum of Art, Florida

The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. / San Antonio Museum of Art, Texas

2005

Figuratively Speaking, Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Go Figure, Multi-Cultural Aspects of the Human Form. Selections from the Permanent Collection, Lowe Art Museum, Florida

2004

Contemporary Art From the Diane and Bruce Hall Collection, Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, Arizona

2003

Paradise Lost? Aspects of Landscape in Latin American Art, Lowe Art Museum at the University of Miami, Miami, Florida

Urbanity Humanity: Acquisitions and Selections from the Permanent Collection, Bronx Museum, Bronx, New York

2002

Crisis Response, RISD Museum, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island

Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami, Florida

2001

Humor and Rage, Caixa Fundacion Catalunya, Barcelona, España

Contemporary Latino Art in the United States, National Hispanic Cultural Center of New Mexico, New Mexico.

2000

The Latin Caribbean: Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California

1998

Primera Bienal Internacional, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Cumaná, Venezuela

XXXème Festival International de la Peinture, Chateau Grimaldi, -Sur-Mer, Francia

1997

Absolut Art Biennial Invitational, Los Angeles, California

1996

Art in Chicago, 1945-1995, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois
Going Places, Summer Group Show, George Adams Gallery, New York, New York

1995

The Reconstructed Figure: The Human Image in Contemporary Art, Katonah Museum of Art, New York

Arts 1995, Navy Pier, Chicago, Illinois

Janssen Collection of Contemporary European and American Art, Jones Museum of Art of the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

1994

American Realism-Figurative Painting, Cline Fine Art Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Selections from the Collection, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

1993

Carib Art: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean, Curaçao National Commission for UNESCO, Netherlands Antilles

1992-93

Latin American Artists of the XXth Century, Museum of Modern Art, New York
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France/ Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany
Cruciformed: Images of the Cross-Since 1980, Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio

Uncommon Ground: Contemporary Latin American Art, Art Gallery of The College at New Paltz, New York

Encounters, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

1991

Awards in the Visual Arts 10, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Albuquerque Museum of Art, History and Science, Albuquerque, New Mexico/
The Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio

Art and Architecture at the Harold Washington Library, Chicago, Illinois

1990

The Awakening, The Discovery Museum, Bridgeport, Connecticut

The Decade Show: Frameworks of Identity in the 1980's, Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art

The Studio Museum, The New Museum, New York, New York

National Drawings Invitational, Arkansas Arts Center; Little Rock, Arkansas.
Signs of the Self: Changing Perceptions, Woodstock Artists Association, Inc.,
Woodstock, New York.

1989

Chicago Artists in the European Tradition, Museum of Contemporary Art,
Chicago, Illinois.

Painting Biennial, Museum of Modern Art, Cuenca , Ecuador

Hispanic Art in the United States; Thirty Contemporary Painters and Sculptors,
The Museum of Fine Arts, Washington, D.C.

The Lowe Art Museum, Miami, Florida; Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, New
Mexico

Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporáneo, México, D.F., México, Los Angeles
County

Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California

The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

1987

Art of the Fantastic - 1920-1987, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis,
Indiana; The Queens Museum, Queens, New York

Center of the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida; Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporáneo,
México, D.F., México.

XIX São Paulo Biennial, São Paulo, Brazil.

15th Competition & Exhibition, The Union League Club, Chicago, Illinois.

Recent Developments in Latin American Drawings, Art Institute of Chicago,
Chicago, Illinois.

1986

Made in America; The Great Lakes States, Alternative Museum, New York, New
York

Contemporary Works on Paper, Struve Gallery, Chicago, Illinois.

1984

Portrait Look-Alikes, University of Illinois, Chicago, Illinois.

1983

The Big Pitcher; 20 Years of Abstracted Figure in Chicago Art, Hyde Park Art
Center, Chicago, Illinois.

Selected Collections

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York

Hirshhorn Museum, Painting and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Archer Huntington Art Gallery, Austin, Texas

RISD Museum, Providence, Rhode Island

De la Cruz Collection, Miami, Florida

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Rubell Family Collection, Miami, Florida

Bronx Museum, New York

Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Museum of Fine Arts, Caracas, Venezuela

Nassau County Museum of Art, Long Island City, New York
Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago, Illinois
Bass Museum of Art, Miami, FL
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana
Espacio 1414 Berezdivin Collection, San Juan, P.R.
Carson, Pirie, Scott & Company Collection, Chicago, IL
Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Co., Chicago, IL
Museum of Modern Art, Santo Domingo, RD.
Fundación Cultural de México, Mexico City, México.
Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale, FL
SADA Collection, Monterrey, México
Leipziger Volkszeitung Collection, Leipzig, Germany
Mexico Cultural Foundation, Mexico City, Mexico
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Halle Collection, Tucson Arizona
Bacardi Art Foundation, Miami, Florida
Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, Arkansas
Museum of Contemporary Art Sofía Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
Museum of Modern Art , Cuenca, Ecuador
Museo del Barrio, New York, New York
Ponce Museum of Art, Ponce, Puerto Rico
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
Cisneros Capital Group Collection, Miami, Florida
Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts
Maison d'Amérique, Paris, France
Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, Arizona
University of Texas, Austin, Texas
Reynolds House Museum of American Art, Winston Salem, North Carolina
Lowe Art Museum, Miami University, Miami, Florida
Museum of Art of Puerto Rico, San Juan, P.R.
Tourism Company, San Juan
Bayamon Museum of Art, Bayamon, P.R.
Museo de Antropología, Historia y Arte, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan
Colección Cooperativa de Seguros Múltiples, San Juan, Puerto Rico
St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort, Rio Grande, P.R.

