

LIST OF WORKS

Ada Bobonis

(b. 1963, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico; lives in San Juan) Selected solo exhibits include Espacio 1414, the Berezdivin Collection, San Juan 2008, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan 2007, Taller Boricua, New York 2004 and Luigi Marrozzini Gallery, San Juan. Group exhibits include "Offerings," Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia 2001 "Piedra, Metal y Madera," Museo de Arte de Ponce 2001, "Juego-Tensión," Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, San Juan, 1999 and "Arco," Madrid, Spain 1997. She has received grants from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and the Puerto Rico Institute of Culture. She holds a BFA from the University of Barcelona, Spain.

Ventanas (1, 2, 4, 5, 6) 2008 digital prints on Plexiglas, aluminum and fluorescent light (1/3) 18 x 36 x 6 in (each work) Collection of Luis Gutiérrez Architects PSC (nos. 2 and 5) and Courtesy of Douz and Mille (nos. 1, 4, and 6)

Staircase, 2008 wood and Formica laminate 45 x 38 x 72 in. Courtesy Douz and Mille

Angela Bonadies

(b. 1970, Caracas, Venezuela; lives in Caracas) Solo exhibit at Galeria 491, Barcelona, Spain 2002. Group exhibits include the Havana Biennial 2006, Museo Jacobo Morales, Caracas 2006, "Torres de Caracas, modernidad silenciada," Sala Mendosa, Caracas 2005, "Desde fuera," Galeria Art al Rec, Barcelona, Spain 2001, and "Un oasis en el desierto azul," Fundación Joan Miró, Barcelona 2000. She has studied at the Central

University of Venezuela and the Manoa Art Studio.

El Fantasma del ornitólogo Los fantasmas de los coleccionistas, 2008 digital C-print (1/5) 30 x 35 in.

From the series *Cosas que Hablan*, 2008 Nine digital C-prints, edition of three 8 x 12 in., 20 x 30 in, 30 x 40 in. Collection of Alexis Hubshman and Courtesy Douz and Mille

Nayda Collazo-Llorens

(b. 1968, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in Pittsburgh and New York) Selected solo exhibits include Media Noche, New York 2008, LMAK Projects, Brooklyn 2007, Project 4, Washington DC 2007, Space Other, Boston 2006 and Galeria Raíces, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Group exhibits include IX International Cuenca Biennial, Ecuador 2007, "None of the Above," Real Art Ways, Hartford and Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan 2004-2005, "Aqui y Aya/ Here and There," El Museo del Barrio, New York 2001 and Blaffer Gallery, Houston 2002, and is included in the Havana Biennial 2009. She holds a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and an MFA from New York University.

ESCaperucita & Little Red Flying Hood, 2009 mixed media installation dimensions variable Courtesy of the artist and LMAK Projects

Test 27, 2008 ink, pigmented marker, acrylic and graphite on canvas 54 x 70 in. Courtesy of LMAK Projects

Magdalena Fernández

(b. 1964, Caracas, Venezuela; lives in Caracas) Selected solo exhibits include Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Caracas 2006, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami 2006, Disegno Art Gallery, Mantua, Italy 2000, Sala Mendosa, Caracas 1998 and 1993. Group exhibits include "Drawing Papers," The Drawing Center, New York 2006, "13 instrumentos de dibujo," Museo Jacobo Morales, Caracas 2005, "Light and Atmosphere," Miami Art Museum 2004, and "Geometry as Avant-garde,"

Alejandro Otero Museum, Caracas 2002. She has studied at the Institute of Superior Studies in Plastic Arts, Caracas, the A.G. Fronzoni Studio, Milan, Italy and the Neumann Institute, Caracas.

1pm006, Ara Araurana, 2006 from the series *Mobile Painting* video of digital animation with sound (3/3) 1 min. 55 sec. loop Courtesy Douz and Mille

Lilian Garcia-Roig

(b. 1966, Havana, Cuba; lives in Tallahassee, Florida) Selected solo exhibitions include Bob Rauschenberg Gallery of Edison State College, Fort Myers, FL 2009, Valley House Gallery, Dallas, TX 2009, Huntsville Museum of Art, Alabama 2008, Grace Museum of Art, Abilene, TX 2008, Carol Jazzar Gallery, Miami, FL 2007. Group exhibitions include "More is More: Maximalist Paintings," Byblos Art Gallery, Verona, Italy 2008 and "Transitory Patterns: Florida Women Artists," National Museum of Women in the Arts 2004. Among her awards are a Joan Mitchell Foundation Award, a Mid-America Arts Alliance/NEA Fellowship Award in Painting, and a fellowship residency

to the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She holds an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania and is professor of painting at Florida State University. Works in this exhibition are from her second fellowship award residency at MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire in 2008.

Hyperbolic Nature: New Hampshire Fall, 2008 oil on canvas 60 x 480 in. (overall); 60 x 48 (each painting) Courtesy of the artist

Fall Flow (NH), 2008 oil on canvas (triptych) 48 x 120 in. Courtesy of the artist



This exhibition has been made possible through a generous contribution from the **Friends of the Art Museum of the Americas.**

EXHIBIT CURATORS

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Laura Roulet

Art Museum of the Americas Organization of American States

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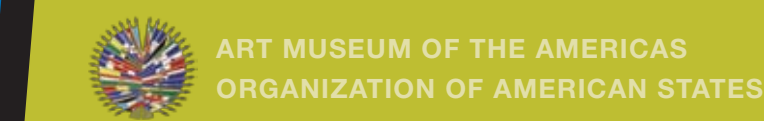
Guerra de la Paz

Alain Guerra (b. 1968, Havana, Cuba; lives in Miami, Florida) and Neraldo de la Paz (b. 1955, Mantanzas, Cuba; lives in Miami, Florida)

Selected solo exhibits include "Power Ties," Daneyal Mahmood Gallery, New York, NY 2009, "OTHERWORLD," Carol Jazzar Gallery, Miami, FL 2009, "The Green Zone," Daneyal Mahmood Gallery, New York, NY 2007, "Oasis," Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, IL 2006, "Overflow," African Heritage Cultural Center, Miami, FL 2003. Selected group exhibits include "The Shape of Things to Come: New Sculpture," Saatchi Gallery, London, UK 2009,

"Polychrome Affinities," Main Miami-Dade Public Library, Miami, FL 2008, "Vested Interest," John Michael Kohler Art Center, Sheboygan, WI 2008, "LOVE SEX WAR," Exit Art, New York, NY 2007, "Between Art and Life: From Joseph Cornell to Gabriel Orozco," Miami Art Museum, Miami, FL 2003.

Spring Sprang Sprung, 2009 site specific installation with found garments, hardware, paint, rope, soundtrack variable dimensions Courtesy of the artists



SPACE UNLIMITED

February 20 – April 12, 2009

RESOUNDING SPACE

Ada Bobonis, Angela Bonadies, Nayda Collazo-Llorens, Magdalena Fernández

Space, which may take the form of architectural dimensions, natural environment, personal habitat, or the parameters of one's interior world, is created in these galleries through video, photography, sculpture and installation art. Magdalena Fernández and Angela Bonadies, both of Venezuela, and Ada Bobonis and Nayda Collazo-Llorens, both of Puerto Rico, also share a preoccupation with the histories of their respective countries and peoples, informing the content of their diverse work.

The birth of modernism was protracted in both Venezuela and Puerto Rico. Unlike in Latin American neighbors Cuba, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, the avant-garde did not emerge until the mid-twentieth century. In Venezuela, the post-World War II oil industry boom created a push toward modernization. In Puerto Rico, political change instigated industrialization and cultural self-definition. Government funding for the arts became available in both countries, leading to a series of important public commissions in Caracas of op art murals and kinetic sculptures by such artists as Jesús Rafael Soto, Alejandro Otero and Carlos Cruz-Diez.

Magdalena Fernández's installations and videos often reference this Venezuelan history of geometric and kinetic abstraction. Combining industrial materials such as aluminum, rubber and optical fiber with natural elements of light, water and earth in her

installations, Fernandez creates phenomenological environments. Like Venezuelan modernist sculptor Gego, she fuses the organic with abstract sculptural form. In the case of the video *Ara Ararauna (1pm006)*, the squawk of the eponymous tropical parrot provides the soundtrack for the colorful, comic digital animation inspired by Piet Mondrian's geometric paintings. The dichotomy of the natural world versus artificial nature also becomes a theme. Part of her series *Dibujos Móviles* (Mobile Drawings), *Ara Ararauna (1pm006)* crosses and combines media boundaries. The traditional genres of drawing and painting are expounded upon through sound and animation.

Angela Bonadies explores a more personal sense of history and space. Her series, *Cosas que hablan* (Things that Speak) consists of portraits of ordinary people in their living spaces. They are reminiscent of early twentieth century German photographer August Sander's typology of people of all professions, classes and political parties. The impassive expressions of Bonadies'

Magdalena Fernández, 1pm006, *Ara Araurana* (detail)



sitters are psychologically mysterious. They are defined by their clothing, belongings and especially their surroundings. The Latin *horror vacui* is evident in the interiors filled to the brim with decades of souvenirs, devotional objects, and portraits of former selves. The tactile accumulations of a lifetime are framed by Bonadies to provide narrative insights into each domestic sphere.

Her recent series *Los fantasmas de los coleccionistas* (The Collectors' Phantoms) are also about accumulations of objects; things collected or archived, and what those objects reveal about their owners. In the case of *El fantasma del ornitólogo* (The Ornithologist's Phantom), the real and imaginary worlds are fused. This young bird scientist's collection is depicted in dead and living form, as inert object and interior fantasy. Again the sub-



Ada Bobonis, *Ventana*

ject is posed in a neutral anthropological style, inviting the viewer to enter his space, to observe and analyze the details of his constructed environment.

Consisting of six light box-illuminated photographs, the architectural element of a staircase and a mass of colored electrical cords, **Ada Bobonis's** installation *Ventanas* (Windows) operates on several levels of meaning. Bobonis constructs a dialogue about architectural authenticity and Puerto Rican history, as well as an aesthetic interplay between two and three-dimensional space.

Taken during the renovation of La Concha Hotel in San Juan, these photographs reference the beginning of modernism in Puerto Rico. Designed by Miguel Toro and Osvaldo Ferrer during the optimistic 1950s era of modernization under Governor Luis Muñoz Marín, the hotel was

once a proud example of progress. Bobonis focuses on the grid of stained glass windows, with their interplay between interior and exterior space. The landscape glimpsed through the windows ranges from beachfront to urban congestion, perhaps commenting on a perceived lack of progress on the island, as the faux-Spanish Revival style of the hotel renovation marks the sad neglect of Puerto Rico's Tropical Modernist heritage.

On an aesthetic level, Bobonis's installation refers to two forms of painterly space: the Renaissance linear perspective where a painting is treated as an illusionistic window onto the world and modern abstraction where the surface becomes flat. The light boxes combine the illusion of windows with the two-dimensional surfaces of the photographs. Infused with beautiful color, these

photo boxes are both painterly and sculptural. They clearly belong to Bobonis's minimalist form of architecturally influenced sculpture, but also point to a new direction of three-dimensional painting.

Nayda Collazo-Llorens's installations are often concerned with codes, mapping and navigation, as she steers between two cultures and languages. Her printmaking and graphic art background promotes a linear approach to painting, drawing, and video. In the case of *ESCaperucita & Little Red Flying Hood*, Collazo-Llorens uses text as a means of creating narrative and environment. Filled with clever double entendre, the text tells the story of a bilingual, same-sex couple following the path of countless Puerto Ricans, up the Atlantic coast. In the course of their journey, they encounter some sort of danger, perhaps wrought by the Bermuda Triangle, and begin to hear (or send?) a distress signal. The Morse code SOS signal



Angela Bonadies, *El Fantasma del ornitólogo*

-- beep, beep, beep -- morphs into the bip, bip, bip of the clave. Text becomes sound through onomatopoeia. As the viewer navigates the gallery, one is reminded of the visual noise constantly confronted in quotidian interaction with technology and the text-filled environment. What is actually read? What is instantly ignored, mentally edited out of consciousness? What codes have become incorporated into daily life in the form of texting (txt spk), used for convenience or to elude the less tech-savvy, i.e. POS (parent over shoulder)? The work reflects the conscious and unconscious process of how external space is perceived, ordered and internalized.

Utilizing the artistic languages of geometric abstraction, social documentary, architecture, and installation, these four artists comment on the worlds they experience. The modern histories of Venezuela and Puerto Rico are reflected in various ways. From images of claustrophobic personal spaces, constructed public spaces, tropical nature, and the traversing of cultures, each artist carves out a space within the historical, the social or the domestic realm, finding something to resound within the viewer.

— Laura Roulet, Independent Curator

MEDIUMS, UNBOUNDED

Lilian Garcia-Roig and Guerra de la Paz

On the surface, two features connect the work of Lilian Garcia-Roig and Guerra de la Paz: content and color. The painter employs nature as her primary subject and renders it through a vivid, though at times unexpected, palette. The sculptors shape a landscape from motley garments, combining diverse tonalities for prismatic effect. The impulse to exhibit them together is not merely superficial. Through their practice, these artists challenge the boundaries of their mediums in ways that link their respective projects. Garcia-Roig and Guerra de la Paz immerse their viewers within enveloping spaces that disconnect them from the real world while simultaneously forcing them to reassess the nature of reality itself.

Over the past few years, [Lilian Garcia-Roig](#) has taken the landscape as a point of departure for her painterly explorations. She paints out-of-doors and strives to translate the natural world as she sees it at a precise moment in time. Because she works over several hours, however, she captures the changing light within a single canvas. The end result is what she refers to as a *cumulative landscape*. Her paintings argue that perception itself is cumulative and that how she paints most closely approximates how we actually see. The paintings have thick, palpable surfaces, describe dense and chaotic spaces, and are rendered in a maximalist style, overwhelming the spectator with their visual material. Viewing Garcia-Roig's paintings is a confusing and disorienting experience, like looking at something before the brain has sorted out the information so as to render it intelligible.

In their arrangement into an installation that wraps around the walls of a gallery, Garcia-Roig's paintings compound their effect of overpowering sight. Not only do they exhaust the eyes, they also make viewers more aware of their own position in space, calling attention to how vision is an embodied process — in other words, the way we perceive the world depends on our upright bodies. As the gaze shifts around the room to take in her painted scenes, the verticality of the body is the clearest point of reference within the chaos; it anchors our vision, which would otherwise become lost in the muddle. Garcia-Roig's paintings thus play with both virtual and real space. They reference scenes from nature that are so intense that they force the spectators to regain awareness of their surroundings; they must remind themselves that they are standing in a gallery, not lost in the woods.

Garcia-Roig also invokes real space through the dense, painterly layers of her canvases. The surfaces appear to be shaped and modeled as though she were working in a three-dimensional medium. The paintings hold together when viewed from afar, but seeing them up close is an altogether different experience, for they come undone. What was a window onto a forest a few feet back becomes an abstract relief. In this way, the spectator's physical positioning dictates the modality of the work, whether abstract or representational, painted or sculpted. Garcia-Roig succeeds in bringing to life not just the scenes she depicts but the entire physical space of and surrounding her canvases.

[Guerra de la Paz's](#) sculptural installation *Spring Sprang Sprung* similarly envelops the viewer within an alternate reality. The artists construct a budding tree out of discarded clothing, tying together all manner of shirts and pants, dresses, sweaters, and socks to create the trunk, branches, leaves, and flowers. Through their installation as well as the ambiance created by the lighting and wall colors, they achieve a complete transformation of the gallery space. The effect is engaging and whimsical, like walking into a children's story. The array of colors and textures sustains visual interest, as does the mode of execution, which also

produces a sense of wonderment. How is it that old cast-offs can be transformed into something so appealing?

This piece contains a pictorial quality that is rare to find in sculpture. It used to be common in classical times for the surfaces of statues and buildings to be colored over, but in high art since the Renaissance an emphasis on artistic purity insisted on keeping mediums separate and discrete. This meant that painting was inherently colorful, but sculpture was bound to the hues of its raw material, whether wood, stone, clay, or metal. Another consequence was to limit the narrative potential of sculpture. Whereas painting could tell stories and create parallel universes, sculpture was static by nature. Guerra de la Paz refuse to be confined by such conventions; their work is more akin to painting because it employs a limitless palette and evokes multiple narratives. Even in *Spring Sprang Sprung* with its landscape theme, the narrative is implied through the installation's physical make-up. Each garment tells a separate story, evoking the life of its previous owner.

In their use of unconventional materials, Guerra de la Paz also engage with the legacy of modernist sculpture, particularly the readymade. Ever since Marcel Duchamp inverted a urinal and called it a sculpture, the

nature of the medium has been redefined. In the 1960s, the French Nouveaux Réalistes made assemblages out of garbage as a critique against excessive consumerism, and Robert Rauschenberg "polluted" paintings by integrating real objects into them. What this deployment of the readymade tended to have in common was that it presupposed a critique against painting, whether for its overemphasis on visuality (its "retinal" aspect, as Duchamp called it) or for its fetishization and ineluctable association with the bourgeois commodity. Guerra de la Paz's work also contains a strong critical element, but its object is not painting; on the contrary, they use the readymade object to create painterly compositions in space. Furthermore, they engage both beauty and sentimentality, aspects rejected by their predecessors. Not only are Guerra de la Paz's installations visually stunning (like Garcia-Roig's paintings, they are almost overwhelming in their excess of optical information), but they also call forth a sense of loss, underscoring the absence of the clothes' previous owners.

On another level, Guerra de la Paz's sculptural installations may be read as social commentaries. In the case of *Spring Sprang Sprung*, its primary targets are individualism, waste, and consumerism. In their recycling of articles of clothing — much of which retains its



Guerra de la Paz, *Oasis* (at the Chicago Cultural Center, 2006)

vibrant colors and appears quite wearable — the artists call attention to society's material excesses. They propose instead an alternate world that favors the collective as opposed to the individual. The knotting together of garments could be read as a metaphor for humanity's interconnectedness, and the evocation of the primal space of nature further rejects the division and compartmentalization brought about by modernity. Indeed, Guerra de la Paz's installations are emphatically untechnological; they depend on collaboration and teamwork to come together, and their mode of execution is transparent. By working as a pair, Alain Guerra and Neraldo de la Paz have already renounced their own individuality, and their work asks the viewers to contemplate the possibility of less ego and more community. Their sculptural installation thereby takes viewers on a journey through different realities: the initial feeling of having entered another world when one encounters *Spring Sprang Sprung*

gives way to a reflection on how to improve the one we actually inhabit.

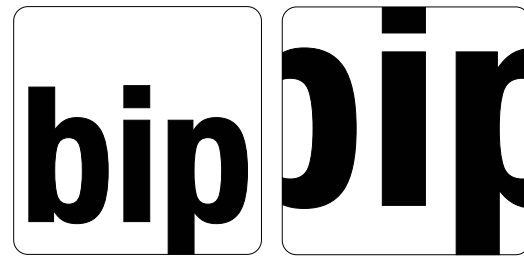
The artistic visions of Lilian Garcia-Roig and Guerra de la Paz have many commonalities. These artists refuse to be contained by the limits imposed over their respective mediums. Garcia-Roig's paintings take on a temporal dimension and are contingent on real space. Guerra de la Paz introduce both narrative and color to the traditionally static and monochrome medium of sculpture and also challenge the individualism thought to be inherent in the artistic act. Immersing their spectators within their constructed landscapes, Garcia-Roig and Guerra de la Paz ask them to reevaluate their own realities, be it from a subjective or a collective perspective.

—Tatiana Flores

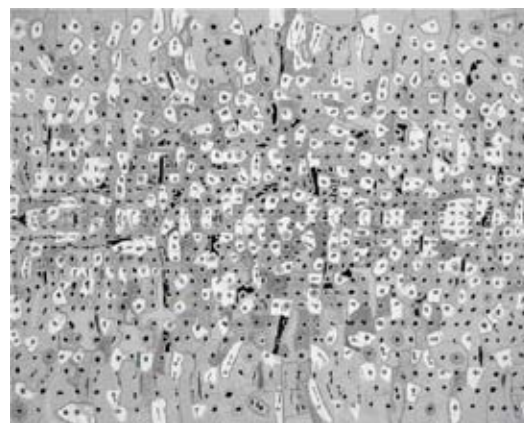
Department of Art History, Rutgers University



Lilian Garcia-Roig, *Hyperbolic Nature: New Hampshire Fall*



Nayda Collazo-Llorens, *ESCaperucita & Little Red Flying Hood* (detail)



Nayda Collazo-Llorens, *Test 27*