

orlando museum of art

FLORIDA PRIZE

in contemporary art

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Foreword

GLEN GENTELE
DIRECTOR + CEO

RIGHT:
Edison Peñafiel, *Sempiterno*
[*Sempiterno*] (detail), 2017, multimedia
installation, 24-channel video,
multichannel audio, dimensions variable

It is hard to believe the Orlando Museum of Art is already in its sixth year of the *Florida Prize* exhibition. I am pleased about how the show has connected within the local community and by extension with many of our friends and colleagues across the nation.

Every year ten emerging to mid-career artists from around the State of Florida are invited to participate in the *Florida Prize*. All of the artists possess a provocative studio practice matched by a distinguished history of exhibitions and honors. This year, Robert Aiosa, Lilian Garcia-Roig, Lola Gómez, Amer Kobašljić, Pepe Mar, Anja Marais, Joe Fig, Edison Peñafiel, Vickie Pierre, and Sri Prabha represent the state of contemporary art in Florida - 2019.

The *Florida Prize* exhibition began as a way to highlight the important work being done across the State in the visual arts and to bring attention to it, to the artists working in the field, and to Orlando as a city that supports art, and that is building a contemporary art scene.

Artists create, and the work they produce brings excitement to a city and to the institution that supports the production of new art and ideas. This exhibition is now noted for its urgency and empathy and explores critical issues of our time while causing us to consider ourselves and many things beyond us that exist in the lives of our fellow citizens across the state, country, and the world.

My congratulations go to the 2019 *Florida Prize* winner, Edison Peñafiel, chosen by the Award Selection Committee to receive the \$20,000 *Florida Prize in Contemporary Art* for his riveting video installations that captured our imagination, and Joe Fig, who was selected to receive the \$2,500 People's Choice Award for his meticulous research in building 3-D models of famous artists in their studios as well as for his engaging paintings of the public in museums viewing works of art.

It is with special thanks and sincere gratitude that I thank our generous sponsors, many of whom have supported this exhibition from its inception. Thank you, Gail and Michael Winn for underwriting the *Florida Prize in Contemporary Art Award*. I offer my deep appreciation to Rita and Jeffrey Adler Foundation, Mr. R.J. Santomassino, Daisy and Jan Staniszkis, Dr. and Mrs. H.E. Gross, Jim and Terry Mahaffey, Dr. and Mrs. Michael Henner, Mall at Millenia, and Hunter Vision, for generously sponsoring the *Florida Prize in Contemporary Art* exhibition, and to Corkcicle for underwriting the People's Choice Award.

I would like to offer a big thank you to our beverage and culinary sponsors for making the preview opening party so lively, warm and exciting. Restaurants included Arthur's Catering, Bento, Bonefish Grill, Cuisiniers, Dubsdread Catering, Gelato-go, Maggiano's Little Italy, Orlando Meats, Soco, and Umi Sushi; beverages were provided by ABC Fine Wine & Spirits, Cooper's Hawk Winery, Cavalier Distributing, Tito's Vodka, and Shakers Bar Catering. Thank you all.

Our party sponsors who helped to create an inviting and comfortable atmosphere I offer my thanks for your generosity and participation, thank you to Porch Therapy, Orlando Wedding & Party Rentals, One Way Valet, and SugarPop Photobooth. To our media partners, Orlando Weekly and South Street & Co., you got the word out and I can't thank you enough.

I would also like to thank our friends and colleagues who lent work to this exhibition—Cernuda Arte, David Castillo Gallery, Dr. Jorge Daaboul and Mrs. Lilian Portilla, and Ernesto and Cecilia Poma.

The winner of this year's *Florida Prize* was determined by the 2019 Award Selection Committee comprised of jurors Sarah Howard, Curator of Public Art and Social Practice at USF, and Jim Frost, former Co-Executive Director at Atlantic Center for the Arts.

The Orlando Museum of Art is indebted to its Board of Trustees. As always, I gratefully acknowledge the entire Museum staff, volunteers, friends, and support groups who work tirelessly to bring *Florida Prize in Contemporary Art* to life. Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to our membership and guests. Your contributions and enthusiasm make our work possible.

Introduction

HANSEN MULFORD
SENIOR CURATOR

CORALIE CLAEYSEN-GLEYZON
ASSOCIATE CURATOR

RIGHT:

Lilian Garcia-Roig, *Cumulative Nature:
St Marks Inlet* (detail), 2007, oil on
canvas, 40 x 30 in.

The Florida Prize in Contemporary Art is organized by the Orlando Museum of Art (OMA) and brings new recognition to the State's most progressive artists. Now in its sixth year, the OMA has surveyed artists working throughout the State before selecting the ten to be represented in the exhibition. Artists range from emerging to mid-career and each is engaged in exploring significant issues of contemporary art and society in original and visually exciting ways. In all cases, they are artists whose achievements are marked by a distinguished record of exhibitions, awards and other recognition. *The Florida Prize in Contemporary Art* underscores the Orlando Museum of Art's commitment to the art of our time, and to supporting artists who live and work in our State.

This year's exhibition presents artists working in a wide variety of media including painting, sculpture, photography and immersive installations, with each advancing their practice in innovative directions. The issues addressed by these artists are also diverse, exploring such topics as the architecture of home, Florida's threatened environment, the overdose epidemic in Central Florida, the refugee's journey, the artist's studio as self-portrait, and the technology of transcendence. *The Florida Prize in Contemporary Art* is an opportunity to discover artists who are expressing ideas relevant to our time in original and provocative works of art.

Woven through this year's presentation is a connecting thread that seems to touch upon the notion of humanity. Human and fallible, in our passions, sufferings, and vulnerabilities; in our wrongdoings against each other, against the environment and against ourselves; in the dramas and traumas that define us, and the roots that connect us to our environment, history, and imagination. Some of this year's artists open a dialogue about latent tensions or actual clashes, and others provide an escape, which comes with the understanding that humans are able to achieve their greatest potential through connectivity and creativity.



Lilian Garcia-Roig

RIGHT:
Lilian Garcia-Roig, Installation view of
the Florida Prize in Contemporary Art,
2019

Lilian Garcia-Roig brings together the language of abstraction and the practice of plein air landscape painting in work that presents a distinctively contemporary view of the natural world. Her landscapes typically bring the viewer into a forest or other environment of dense vegetation to confront a tangled mass of tree trunks, branches, roots, and vines that in their detail can overwhelm the senses. Viewed at a distance, the illusion of a landscape space is maintained, but as the viewer moves closer the images begin to break down. The material presence of paint becomes evident in bold gestural brushstrokes and vibrant color sometimes applied directly from the tube. The surface of the canvas comes alive and appears as an almost abstract composition. "I want to lure viewers in through the image and then push them out through the surface," Garcia-Roig says. "These works are as much about the materiality of paint and the physicality of the painting process as they are about melding the illusionist possibilities of painting with its true abstract nature."

Garcia-Roig's large, multipart painting installations comprise individual works hung together, which appear to be part of a unified space. They are in fact separate views of related spaces, each painted on-site in a single day. Painted wet-on-wet, the paintings are cumulative, the artist adding new details throughout the day as the light continuously changes. "I find the passing of time and changing light to be essential and welcome elements in the creation of my works," she says. While painting, Garcia-Roig also continually focuses in and out at various depths of the scene so that one area may record the light in the morning while an adjacent area may document appearances in the afternoon. In the end there is an expanded sense of time and space in the work which represents an accumulation of fleeting moments, the sum of the artist's experiences of the day.

Fluid Perceptions: Banyan as Metaphor, Garcia-Roig's largest installation, consists of 15 paintings of parts of various banyan trees. There is a sense of being surrounded and immersed within the massive network of leaves, branches, and aerial roots. While there is a formal unity across the assembled paintings, each panel examines a different tree part as if the viewer were moving around it or changing focus to different sections. It is where the edges of each panel meet that these individual views are most evident and where new spatial relationships within the overall installation emerge.

Born in Cuba and raised in the United States, Garcia-Roig imagined the structure of the banyan tree as a metaphor of the immigrant experience. The tree's longevity and the way in which it expands by laying down its aerial roots have symbolic correlation to the laying down of family roots, which in time become the supportive trunks of the next generation.

Recently Garcia-Roig had an opportunity to return to Cuba where she completed a series of landscapes in the Viñales Valley. The valley is famous for its distinctive mountains called mogotes which rise abruptly from the valley floor. These iconic geological formations have been a subject for Cuban landscape painters going back to the 19th century, and Garcia-Roig wished to contribute in her own way to this venerable tradition as a Cuban-born landscape painter. Painting on-site, she used acrylic on paper so that she could work in remote locations. Rather than depicting a broad panorama typical of Viñales Valley landscapes, she brings the viewer up to the sheer cliff faces of the mogotes. Her dense, fluid brushstrokes create a sense of the rock's compressed mass while also capturing the astonishing variety of color seen in these ancient landmarks.

Garcia-Roig is currently a Professor in the Department of Art, Florida State University, Tallahassee. She has been included in numerous group and solo exhibitions nationally and internationally. Major awards include a Joan Mitchell Foundation Award in Painting, a Mid-America Arts Alliance/NEA Fellowship Award in Painting, a State of Florida Individual Artist Fellowship Award in Painting, and a Kimbrough Award from the Dallas Museum of Art.



MR. AND



Previous page view of Garcia-Roig's Florida Prize Installation from main front gallery entrance. Paintings shown (From left to right) - *Fluid Perceptions: Banyan as Metaphor*; *State of Florida: UnControlled Burn*; *Hyperbolic Nature: La Florida*; *Cumulative Nature: St. Marks Inlet*. (All these works are oil on canvas, painted on-site in various locations in Florida.)

Top: Installation view from back of gallery showing the *free standing wall of the Hecho En Cuba (Made in Cuba)* series of on-site paintings, (acrylic on paper mounted to wooden panels paintings). Additionally, you can see on the far left, *Cumulative Nature: Tannic Waters* and part of *Fluid Perception: Banyan as Metaphor* (both oil on canvas).