

GALLERIACONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HAVANA

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 Open Wednesdays to Sundays from 12.00 noon to 6.00 pm and by appointment.

CUBA MI AMOR

*Alejandro Campins, Iván Capote, Yoan Capote, Elizabet Cerviño,
 Leandro Feal, Carlos Garaicoa, Celia & Yuniór, Osvaldo González, Yonel Hidalgo,
 Luis López-Chávez, Yornel Martínez, José Mesías, Reynier Leyva Novo,
 Susana Pilar, Wilfredo Prieto, José Yaque*

Opening Sunday 15th October 2017 from 12.00 noon
 Exhibition from 15th October to 31st December 2017

Galleria Continua has developed internationally with the ambition to establish a living dialogue among the arts, cultures and continents. After San Gimignano, Peking and Boissy-le-Château, its adventure continues in 2015 with the opening of a new space in the heart of Havana, Cuba. Since then, the gallery has organized a regular flow of exchanges among artists of the five continents, thus succeeding in the creation of new dialogues with Cuban artists.

This is the spirit which has driven GALLERIA CONTINUA / Les Moulins to host a collective exhibition of 16 artists from Cuba on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Moulins space in France. Whilst celebrating a bet which has proved correct, the exhibition enhances the great formal variety of contemporary Cuban production. The works presented are directly linked to the context of their own creation, but can interface with the works of the other invited international artists, united by the industrial space of the old Moulins factory.

Alejandro Campins (1981, Manzanillo) presents *Letargo* (Lethargy), a series of panel paintings made starting from photos taken while travelling in Europe in 2017, looking for old World War II and Cold War bunkers. The landscapes plunge us into an anonymous and timeless environment. Campins is interested in the way in which simple shapes play in space with their presence, in how they become detached from space and condense a story, marked by complexity, frustration, obsession and madness. These simple shapes condense different stories in themselves, marked by their complexity, frustrations, obsessions and madness. They are architectural structures that draw us closer to our intimate fear of death.

Iván Capote (1973, Havana). The series of works on exhibition were created and presented in very different contexts. They differ from one another in their cultural, sociological and philosophical form and content, but find unity in their conceptual dimension.

Yoan Capote (1977, Piñar del Río) presents three paintings of a series titled *Isla* (Island). The horizon and the sea are visible in the distance. As he approaches, the visitor loses the figurative dimension of the painting and comes face to face with the metallic aspect of its surface that turns into a wall or an «iron curtain». Its title, *Perímetro* (Perimeter) brings to mind a state of isolation, reinforced by the symbolic charge of the sea for Cuba.

The Capote brothers, Yoan et Iván, present an original work in duo. It is a work that encourages the destruction of walls and borders in favour of a new communication through language. By breaking away from the unity of the wall, each block of cement

gives shape to the letters of the alphabet, spurring the establishment of a dialogue. The letters present themselves as the founding element of language, just like the blocks of cement are the starting point for the construction of a separation wall.

Elizabet Cerviño (1986, Manzanillo) exhibits five canvases from the series *Farallones, Testimonios de la brisa*, (Sea Stacks. Testimony of the Breeze) created by the artist in the space of Les Moulins. The materials used refer to the corrosive effect of sea salt on iron. The paintings form abstract lines that call to mind the silhouettes of sea stacks. On the ground, 59 glass globes are filled with rain water, creating a living organic whole. As time goes by, the water in the globes evaporates, leaving a trace of its presence on the walls. The number of globes corresponds to the beads of a Christian rosary.

Leandro Feal (1986, Havana) presents a series of photographs taken when travelling from Havana to Moscow, New York and Madrid. Like in a film by Alejandro González Iñárritu, Leandro Feal composes a temporal and figurative «synchrony» among the images. Each one tells an individual story, while connecting with the others in plays of correspondence of forms, compositions and colours. By mixing photographic styles and genres, the series comprises portraits, architectures, landscapes and works of art, questioning the ability of photography to create its own narration.

The collaboration of GALLERIA CONTINUA with the artist Carlos Garaicoa (1967, Havana) has lasted for twenty years. The installation exhibited establishes a parallel between the Japanese garden, an expression of Zen philosophy, and the Cuban context. The stones normally placed on the sand have been replaced by fragments of columns from ruined buildings in Old Havana. The photos exhibited along the space reproduce these same columns associated with Haikus in which the artist expresses himself on the destiny of his generation that has to face one of the most devastating economic and social crises in the history of the country.

Celia & Yuniór (duo of artists from 2004. González 1985, Havana - Yuniór Aguiar 1984, Havana). The installation proposes a formal comparison between the dynamisms of two different political systems. Each structure arranged on either side of the space represents the Cuban Council of Ministers and the French Council of Ministers. The cement lines that make them up refer to a ministry where each fraction corresponds to the years the various ministers remained in office.

In the small adjacent room *Encarnaciones* (Incarnations) presents a collection of logos of public Cuban companies, all converging towards a single place as they all belong to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Registro de población (Registry) is a work created over the course of the years and presents a collection of identity cards of the duo of artists that have been declared lost. Each one is legal but has expired. It questions the relationship between personal identity and the place occupied by the individual in society.

Colonias Epífitas (Epiphyte Colonies) exhibits the pages of an agenda where the duo kept the information researched on the old bourgeois residences of the Velado and Playa districts in Havana, which became the property of State agencies after the triumph of the Castro Revolution. The notes on each page trace the story of the identity of the owners who succeeded one another over time.

Osvaldo González (1982, Camagüey). The monumental installation titled *Muro/Muro* (Wall/Wall) is made from adhesive tape and light, which – together – create a moving volume that remodels and divides the space of the wide alley of the Moulin. A suite of photographic compositions is exhibited on the mezzanine. Each one portrays different views of the gallery. Hence, the visitor re-discovers in the images the space he has walked through during his visit. The experience of space is reflected by means of the photographic image modelled by the effects of the light that seeps through.

Yonel Hidalgo (1970, Havana) The works are linked together by his sensitivity towards man. *Campionario* (Pattern Book) is made up of five wooden boxes containing small pieces of paintings turned into fragments of fabric. The public is encouraged to passively observe these scraps of scattered images. In the video titled *Alberto*, the homonymous protagonist is a man Yonel met in Havana. The artist would have liked to get to know him better as he was fascinated by the man's ability to pick himself up and find alternative ways towards self-sufficiency. His behaviour reveals the instinct to use his arms, despite the fact that he does not have them, showing to what extent the gesture is essential.

The series of drawings on carbon paper titled *Restauración* (Restoration) represents handicrafts. Man's creative ability.

Luis López-Chávez (1988, Manzanillo) exhibits two paintings belonging to a series titled *La Distancia* (Distance), which reproduce the motif of the tiling used in Cuban colonial homes, symbol of the Country's now deteriorated republican past. The composition stretches itself between abstraction and figuration and only the ray that crosses it is a reference to reality. The visitor, depending on the distance he chooses to keep between himself and the painting, shifts from figuration to abstraction.

Contra los poetas (Against Poets) prolongs the interest nurtured by the artist in the relationship that the visitor establishes with the work. The installation encourages arranging, in a playful manner, the geometrical wooden shapes obtained from carpentry scraps.

Yonel Martínez (1981, Manzanillo). When facing *The pure land*, the line of the horizon seems to be suspended in the exhibition space. As one draws nearer, glued fragments of a political map are revealed and evoke the image of a world dilated into space. Two elements from Eastern and Western cultures merge into a single object in the work titled *Estatua de Buda con chicles* (Statue of Buddha with Chewing Gums), until one disappears favouring the other.

Cette phrase mesure cinq mètres (This Phrase Measures Five Metres) echoes the artist's linguistic and tautological research and questions the ability of language to become a copy of reality. This analogy between signifier and signified is found in the work *Wherever is here*, where the location symbol that shows the visitor's position appears to be distorted by the overlapping textual indications. In the large hall of the building, *Equilibrio* (Balance), a table suspended from its centre, is in precarious balance depending on whether or not the food consumed by visitors is on it. The established physical and energetic balance is directly linked to Eastern culture because the elements are placed on the right or on the left, depending on their yin or yang nature.

José Mesías (1990, Havana). The installation presents a series of objects for everyday use found in the streets of Havana or that once belonged to the artist's grandfather, collected over time. In these objects, accumulated by the artist, the poetic dimension comes to surface through chance or family legacy. With these «collections of found objects» José Mésias tries to reveal the narrative charge that an ordinary object can conceal.

Reynier Leyva Novo (1983, Havana). The work *El deseo de morir por otros* (The Desire to Die for Others) was exhibited in the Cuba pavilion of the 2017 Venice Biennale. The installation presents a faithful reproduction of the war weapons belonging to the Mambises guerrilla soldiers who fought in the 19th century against Spain in the Cuban War of Independence. The immaculate pieces pay homage to the strength of these soldiers who marked the history of the country. The photographic series titled *Un día feliz* (A Happy Day) was created using images from historical archives, portraying a political personality in the staging of his power. Novo's intervention consists in suppressing this key character around whom the composition is structured. The understanding of the image is hence confused by the void left by this disappearance. *Una y mil véces* (One and a Thousand Times) is an extreme reduction of Mao's red book and a synthesis of its constitutive codes. Just like ideologies are spread through codes, in *Una y mil veces* we find the colour red linked to communism and the repetition of the word, amplified and propagating without end.

Susana Pilar (1984, Havana) presents two video performances related to collective and individual history. The action carried out in *Re-territorialización* (Re-territorialisation) (2016) deals with the history of colonisation and the forced eradication of the peoples of Africa and China. It was created in 2016 in Palermo, the main gateway to migratory flows in Europe. *Hijas de Yemen* (Daughters of Yemen) focuses on the resilience of the human body. The title recalls the condition of Yemeni girls forced from childhood to marry despite their body is not ready for any kind of marital activity.

On the occasion of the opening on October 15th 2017, Susana Pilar will stage a performance entitled *A la historia se le mira de frente* (Look at History in the Face) which is a response to research done on her family. She questions our relationship with our history and the way of taking on this family legacy.

Wilfredo Prieto (1978, Sancti Spiritus) presents *En la mente de dios* (In the Mind of God), an installation exhibited for the first time in South Africa. The artist's artistic gesture is neutral, the hides are left untouched, not subjected to manipulations of any kind. Cowhides on the walls can be considered as an explicit reference to nature, or as an abstraction that plays on the contrasts of shapes and colours.

José Yaque (1985, Manzanillo). *El río y la fábrica* (The River and the Factory) highlights the bond that once existed between the river and the old paper mill. The installation, created specifically for Moulin de Boissy, was made starting from fragments of pieces belonging to the old paper mill. The interweaving electric cables guide the visitor to discover the space it occupies until they plunge into the river and reconnect with it. The work enhances the link between the ephemeral and the eternal. The paper mill no longer exists while the river is still there.