Update: Soriano in Southern California, Mendive in the Bronx, and Pacific Standard Time in LA

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Rafael Soriano, *Interior*, 1953
Courtesy Long Beach Museum of Art

Soriano in Southern California. *Rafael Soriano: The Artist as Mystic* (http://lbma.org/event/rafael-soriano-the-artist-as-mystic), the retrospective that premiered this past January at the McMullen Museum of Art in Boston, has arrived on the West Coast, where it opened and the end of June at the Long Beach Museum of Art. Close to 100 paintings, drawings, and pastels trace Soriano’s career from early geometric abstractions to the translucent forms of his later work. According to the museum website, the show runs there through October 1, then travels to the Frost Art Museum in Miami, wrapping the tour at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Havana. For the Cuban Art News interview with the show’s curator, Elizabeth Thompson Goizueta, click here (http://www.cubanartnews.org/news/soriano-rediscovered-the-artist-as-mystic).
Mesías in Havana. In his show at Factoría Habana (https://www.facebook.com/FactoriaHabana), José Manuel Mesías focuses on specific episodes in the Cuban wars of independence to explore the mechanisms by which history is constructed, imagined, rewritten, and turned into myth. His paintings and installations fill the galleries of Factoría Habana, where Índice de imagines: José Manuel Mesías runs through October 20.

José Manuel Mesías, El médico del espacio
Courtesy Factoría Habana

And Servando Cabrera. The artist's portraits of rural residents and Havana urbanites are the subject of Mírame así: Habaneras y guajíros de Servando Cabrera, which opened last month at Galería Habana (http://galeriahabana.com/). On view through July 21.

Octavio Irving at Servando. While Cabrera is showcased at Galería Habana, his namesake Galería de Arte Servando (https://www.facebook.com/servandogallery) is presenting Octavio Irving: Pulsoines. Combining drawing and painting, "the dozen works in Pulsoines create a restless and untranquil space," writes Rafael Acosta de Arriba in the exhibition text. "It is as if Octavio Irving had entered the realm of literary images of Edgar Allan Poe—certainly one of his favorite authors—intending to translate them into visual icons." On view through July 29 at Galería Servando.
And Alpízar at Villa Manuela. What do José Martí, José Lezama Lima, Virgilio Piñera, Bebo Valdés, Celia Cruz, and Guillermo Cabrera Infante have in common? They’re all featured, in beautifully rendered detail, in Rubén Alpízar’s series Mi arca (My Ark), one of the works on view in La habitación del simulacro. Rubén Alpízar’s exhibition, currently on view at Galería de Arte Villa Manuela (https://www.facebook.com/GaleriaDeArteVillaManuela/), runs through July 28.

Next week: Ben Jones. Next Friday, July 21, the artist and longtime Cuba hand opens his solo show, Resistencia / Resistencia, at the Edificio Universal of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes. The reception begins at 4 p.m. A conversation with the artist is scheduled for 11 a.m. the next morning, in the 4th-floor Hemiciclo of the Edificio Universal.

Posters in Santiago de Cuba. New York’s Center for Cuban Studies has teamed up with the Galería René Valdés in Santiago de Cuba to present Clásicos carteles cubanos del siglo XX. Curated by Alejandro Lescay Hierrezuelo, Sally Rivas Hung, and Raimel Vuelta, the show opened June 30 and runs through the summer. At the reception, longtime Center for Cuban Studies director Sandra Levinson was presented with the “Crecemos” award—a sculpture of José Martí by Alberto Lescay—and “tons of flowers,” as she wrote to us.
In Santiago de Cuba. Sandra Levinson accepts an award from scultor Alberto Lescay.

Courtesy Sandra Levinson


Pacific Standard Time starts rolling in Los Angeles. Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is an ambitious, region-wide arts initiative focusing on Latin American and Latino art and culture, involving approximately 70 museums and organizations across Southern California. Although most exhibitions and programs will open in the fall, a few are slated for the summer. Among the first to open is Home – So Different, So Appealing (http://www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/home-so-different-so-appealing), a look at the idea of home from a Latin American and Latino perspective. Now on view at LACMA, the show includes work by Luis Cruz Azaceta, Félix González Torres, and María Elena González. González’s 2017 version of Magic Carpet/Home re-creates her 2003 outdoor sculpture, a made-to-scale replica of the floor plan of an apartment in L.A.’s Watts district. Home runs through October 15.
Coming next month. More PST: LA/LA shows open in August, including Deconstructing Liberty: A Destiny Manifested (http://muzeo.org/?exhibition=deconstructing-liberty-a-destiny-manifested). Opening August 5 at Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center in Anaheim, CA, the international group show includes Ángel Delgado, Reynier Leyva Novo, Carlos Martiel, and Ángel Ricardo Ricardo Rios.


Coming: Luna in Boca Raton. Taking inspiration from his Cuban training, his years in Mexico, and his current life in Miami, Carlos Luna’s upcoming show features a new body of work on amate paper, a traditional product, made from tree bark, dating back to pre-Columbian Mexico. Deep Line Drawings by Carlos Luna (https://www.bocamuseum.org/exhibitions/deep-line-drawings-carlos-luna) opens Tuesday, August 8 and runs through December 31 at the Boca Raton Museum of Art.
On TV next month. The documentary Elían, which premiered on the film festival circuit this spring, is coming to US cable television. Elían will air simultaneously on CNN/US and CNN en español (http://cnnpressroom.blogs.cnn.com/2017/06/29/elian-premieres-thursday-aug-24-on-cnn-us-cnn-en-espanol/) with what the channel is calling “limited commercial interruption.” Running two hours, the film debuts at 9 p.m. on Thursday, August 24. It will run again on CNN/US at midnight on Friday, August 25, and again on Saturday, August 26 at 10 p.m. and Sunday, August 27 at 2 a.m. (All times given are Eastern.)

And a good read. Online at Art in America, Rachel Price offers a lengthy, well-considered essay on Adiós Utopia: Dreams and Deceptions in Cuban Art Since 1950—which ran earlier this year at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and will open later this fall at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis—and Wild Noise/Ruido salvaje, which recently closed at the Bronx Museum of the Arts. By far the most detailed review of either show to appear in print to date. In English; click here (http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/beyond-the-revolution/).
BEYOND THE REVOLUTION

by Rachel L. Price

Two exhibitions—one extending from 1950 to the present and the other focused on the 1990s through today—bring artworks made in Cuba to US audiences.

EVEN BEFORE the December 2014 announcement of the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba, several major US museums had begun organizing comprehensive shows of contemporary Cuban art. Their openings this spring came on the heels of both fervor for all things Cuban and a new uncertainty about what changes the Trump administration may effect. "Wild Noise/Ruido Salvaje," presented by the Bronx Museum of the Arts through July 3, and "Adiós Utopia: Dreams and Deceptions in Cuban Art Since 1959," which closed in May at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and opens on November 11 at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, quickly bumped up against the limits of US-Cuban relations. Both exhibitions were originally intended to include works from Cuba's Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (MNBA), which exhibited some eighty pieces from the Bronx Museum's collection for the first part of "Wild Noise/Ruido Salvaje" in 2015. But the risk that artworks entering the United States might be seized due to claims concerning properties confiscated during the revolution discredited Cuban institutions from significant lending. The US institutions were
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Servando Cabrera makes a rare appearance at Galería Habana as other Havana spaces host solo shows by José Manuel Mestías, Octavio Irving, and Rubén Alpízar. Classic poster design is celebrated in Santiago de Cuba—and coming soon, via Hollywood, to Pasadena. Dominos start slapping at PAMM, and a massive Latin American initiative slowly unrolls across Southern California, bringing Cuban artists with it.

Playing the Fool: On the Tradition of Comic Politics in Cuba

In Miami, Hacense al Bobo / Playing the Fool takes as its starting point the figure of El Bobo de Abele, the beloved 1926 creation of artist and caricaturist Eduardo Abele. Janet Batet takes a closer look at the Bobo and his satirical descendents in the work of 3 contemporary Cuban artists.