



# INTERSECCIONES

HAVANA » « PORTLAND

# INTERSECCIONES

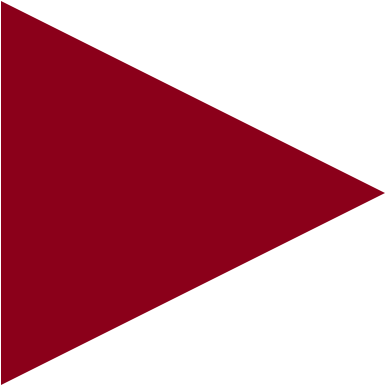

## HAVANA » « PORTLAND

Adriana Arronte  
Elizabet Cerviño  
Yornel J. Martínez  
Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo  
Reynier Leyva Novo  
Rafael Villares



COVER: photo by Rafael Villares

ABOVE: photo by Dan Kvitka



**INTERSECCIONES** IS A CONVERSATION BETWEEN two crossroads of the Americas. Cuba is one of the earliest colonies and a pivot of global trade. Portland is the end of the Oregon Trail — first traveled by the college’s namesakes. All six artists have considered the particular history of Portland in their work for the exhibition. **Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo** creates installations and public actions that poke at the troubled cultural space for people of African ancestry. **Reynier “El Chino” Novo’s** repurposed cultural objects reveal the depleted energy of true political action. **Elizabet Cerviño’s** spare performances draw from the haunted contradictions in historic spaces. **Adriana Arronte’s** installations of exquisitely crafted glass and plastic objects complicate spaces of personal consumption. **Rafael Villares’s** displaced landscapes create tensions between desire and reality. **Yornel J. Martínez Elías’s** textual interventions replace movie titles on cinema marquees with lines of poetry.

When the idea to do a show of Cuban artists first emerged, we had no inkling of the historic change about to take place between the two countries. We happened to be in Havana on the day that President Obama met with Raúl Castro and announced he would take Cuba off the terrorist list. This provides the backdrop for **Intersecciones**. In the public imagination of the US, Cuba is either a corrupt Communist failure or a victim of US imperialism depending on your view. A glaze of “cubanismo” corrupts the American perception of Cuba — racy nightclubs, Che worship, and old cars. The perception of Cuba as isolated and caught in the past is a blindness caused by American foreign policy. Cuba has been in communication with the rest of the world. The artists we met trained at ISA (Instituto Superior de Arte). They bring a very unique, global perspective to Portland. This show is an attempt to open up interchanges between Cuban and Pacific Northwest artists. Like Havana, Portland is a small city that occupies a large place in the national imagination. We hope this is the first of several exchanges.

Linda Tesner, director of the Hoffman Gallery, Lewis & Clark College

Elliott Young, cocurator and professor of history, Lewis & Clark College

Daniel Duford, cocurator and visiting associate professor of art, Reed College





## BETWEEN HAVANA & PORTLAND: Curating an Exhibition

by LINDA TESNER | Director of the Hoffman Gallery,  
Lewis & Clark College, Portland, Oregon

*"Havana and Portland are two cities in the Americas that appear on the surface to be a world apart: one tropical, sunny, with the air of a lost identity in a struggle of colonial, communist, and contemporary idiosyncrasies; the latter, rainy and hidden in the forest of the northwest, in a constant flux to define and redefine itself, an amalgamation of pastiche individualism. While vastly different in geography, climate, and language, the two cities share a certain daring vibrancy in their permissive tolerance for the arts and their acceptance of collective, vanguard-driven arts, and radical self-expression."*

Drew Lenihan '12, *Sobre el Muro*

THE SPARK OF INSPIRATION — to be so bold as to curate an exhibition of Cuban art in the Hoffman Gallery — was born from a project executed by three Lewis & Clark College alumni in 2012. Samuel Ashman '12, Spencer Byrne-Seres '13, and Drew Lenihan '12 undertook an alternative spring break trip in which they led eleven Lewis & Clark undergraduate students to Havana with the objective to establish a cultural exchange between Cuban artists and art students. Two projects

Adriana Arronte | *Change of State (Insectos necrófagos)* installation with technical assistance by  
Camilla Radoyce and Elizabeth Valadez | 2015. Photo by Soulayvanh Biesel

evolved out of that venture: a documentary film, called *Luz y Sombra*, about public art on Havana's famed Malecón, and a collaboration between US and Cuban students that led to an exhibition in the Hoffman Gallery during the summer of 2012.

I was impressed and intrigued by the "guerilla" curatorial practices that led to the compelling exhibition, *Sobre el Muro*. In essence, the Lewis & Clark students gathered with students from the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), Havana's prestigious art college. Despite language barriers and varying levels of previous studio engagement, US and Cuban students paired up and worked through methodologies to cocreate works for an exhibition in Portland. (By this I do not mean that they all contributed to a group exhibition; literally, the pairs of students jointly conceived and executed objects.) The leap from an interesting idea to a documented exhibition was thrilling.

The next nudge came in the fall of 2012, when Daniel Duford and I had just finished curating the show *Fighting Men: Leon Golub, Peter Voulkos, and Jack Kirby*. That same autumn Reynier "El Chino" Novo came to Portland and Elliott Young hosted a dinner party to introduce him to Oregon curators. We were intrigued by Novo's work — work that is deeply conceptual, with an elegance of execution, objects that intellectually tap into Cuba's turbulent history while simultaneously addressing universal themes. Daniel and I looked at each other and agreed to investigate ways in which to cultivate an exhibition of young Cuban artists. Elliott, who has traveled ex-

tensively in Cuba and has led student semesters abroad there, was key to helping us bring this notion to fruition.

In April 2015 Elliott was in residence in Havana with Lewis & Clark students on a semester abroad program. Daniel and I ventured to Havana to look at artwork. Elliott had already partnered with Julia Portela Ponce de León, an art historian and curator at ISA. With Julia's expertise and familiarity with ISA graduates, we enjoyed sixteen enormously engaging studio visits. Needless to say, it was very difficult to pare down the sixteen artists to a manageable number for a Portland exhibition.

How did we figure this out? We knew that we were not interested in curating an exhibition of work that might be mostly attractive as tourist souvenirs: breezy tropical landscapes, the nostalgia of vintage American cars, or homages to Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. We started the project with some unfounded and preconceived ideas about how isolated Cuba is from the art world, and how surely most Cuban art must have political bearings, as if the US embargo against Cuba would be a primary force in the making of art there. I am now, indeed, a little embarrassed at how naïve and US-centric I was. While, at the time, Cuba was forcibly exiled from US culture, island artists are hardly severed from contact with the rest of the world. Indeed, because Cuba so highly prizes the cultural contributions of her artists, and the prestige that these artists accrue to Cuba when their work is shown abroad, Cuban artists have a

robust presence in the international art world and possibly more opportunities to travel than many US artists. All of the artists that we selected for this exhibition have had numerous residencies, fellowships, and exhibitions in other countries. Reynier Novo and Susana Delahante have been included in the Venice Biennale. The monographs and periodicals that we observed in the artists' studios indicated that "isolation" is relative, and that Cuban artists have substantial channels through which to connect with other contemporary artists.

We encountered many logistical obstacles to the organization of *Intersecciones: Havana/Portland*. How could we represent the six artists that we ultimately selected without incurring impossible and exorbitant transportation challenges? If the thematic underpinning of the exhibition was to be an experience that would foster interchange between Portland and Cuban artists, how would we engender that? We decided that the most effective solution to these issues would be to bring the Cuban artists to Portland, to either make their work here, or to use their work as agency to enter into a dialogue with Portland artists and Hoffman Gallery visitors. We hoped that by inviting the artists to Portland we would offer the artists a meaningful experience that would not only enhance their careers, but also contribute to their studio practices. Equally, we hoped that regional participants in the exhibition (Lewis & Clark and Reed College students who assisted in the making of objects here, artists who participated in Yornel Martínez's alternative zine project, visitors to the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, who observed Adriana Arronte's residency in the MOG hot

shop, the casual Hoffman Gallery visitor) would experience some sort of aesthetic and/or actual camaraderie with the Cuban artists.

It would be sheer hubris to draw any conclusions about Cuban art, or American/Cuban relations, based on ten days in Havana and the process of bringing six Cuban artists' work to Portland. The experience of curating *Intersecciones* was singular in innumerable ways. But paradoxically, the process was and is also like most other successful curatorial projects: fundamentally a thesis that is repeatedly tested by the evidence of visual artwork, developed through networks and investigations, evolving organically as one idea leads circuitously to another or logistical roadblocks lead to new opportunities. That is, perhaps, a description of the curatorial process in a nutshell.

The best exhibitions are like stones dropped into still water, reverberating outwardly. *Intersecciones* evolved from the epicenter of a student experience in 2012 and, hopefully, will continue to redound. We auspiciously — but unintentionally — opened the exhibition on January 28, the birth date of Cuba's national hero, poet José Martí, which makes me think of the continuity of all creative endeavors, how through lines eventually weave across cultural, political, geographic, and even temporal boundaries.



UPPER LEFT & CLOCKWISE: Reynier Novo, Susana Delahante, Elizabet Cerviño, and Rafael Villares. Upper right and lower left photos by Soulayvanh Biesel



# LINDA TESNER: OBSERVATIONS & NOTES

**APRIL 9, 2015** One of my favorite things about riding in the boteros ("boaters," the large, old American-made cars that serve as private taxis) was noticing the innovations employed to keep the cars functional. It was not uncommon to see a door handle hand-carved out of a piece of wood or another version of an elegant jerry-rigged repair. A taxi owner can't hop on over to the local Chevy dealership to pick up a new part. This came to symbolize, for me, a pervasive ingenuity in managing resources and a talent we observed over and over again as we visited artist studios.

**APRIL 10, 2015** Wi-Fi is not even close to widely available in Havana. When we visited the studio compound owned by Cuba's most widely known contemporary artist, Kcho, we noticed masses of young people hovering over devices, availing themselves of Kcho's wireless. Oddly, electronic communication is commonplace, but that doesn't mean that it's easily accessible. Our iPhones were worthless in Havana, which made our interactions with the Cuban artists even more reliant on Elliott and Julia as our translators.

**APRIL 11, 2015** Daniel and I were in the apartment of a family of artists when Presidents Barack Obama and Raúl Castro met in Panama City to work to end the enmity that has existed between the two nations for more than 50 years. In what felt like a surreal and poignant coincidence, we watched the historic conference together on TV.

**APRIL 13, 2015** I sent postcards to friends from the historic Hotel Nacional de Cuba – the luxurious retreat enjoyed by Hollywood's elite (and the Mob) pre-revolution, and the setting for Fidel Castro's formulation of the 26th of July Movement. The first postcard arrived in Los Angeles two months later, on June 13th. This belies, to me, the pervasive market-speak about how small the world has become. Some forms of communication still transmit. . . slowly.

**DECEMBER 2015** We like to think that those of us involved in the project (artists and curators) are among a more sophisticated demographic that is inclined to want to understand one another's culture, but there are some funny, fundamental things that we just do not understand about each other's countries. In discussing her natural hair project, *We bring it curly*, Susana Delahante asked if I would invite Chris Rock to the opening. He had, after all, produced *Good Hair* (2009), a comedy/documentary about African-American hair styles, and would likely have an interest in her project.

**JANUARY 29, 2016** In a parallel experience, I was alarmed, just after the opening of *Intersecciones*, to notice a goblet with the portrait of William Howard Taft in the line-up of Cuban leaders in Novo's *The Crystal Kiss*, an installation of chronologically sequential portraits of US and Cuban presidents. I was about to contact the fabricators of *The Crystal Kiss* to suggest that there had been a "misprint," when I thought better of it and did a quick Google search. Indeed, Taft declared himself Provisional Governor of Cuba under the terms of the Cuban-American Treaty of Relations of 1903, a post he held for two weeks (September 29 – October 13, 1906). Who knew? (Obviously Novo did.) Despite the fact that Cuba is a true neighbor, my grasp of American/Cuban relations is spotty and uninformed, at best.

►LT





UPPER LEFT & LOWER LEFT: opening reception. Photos by Ted Jack

RIGHT: Elizabet Cervino performance with Oscar Guerrero. Photo by Rafael Villares

---

## HAVANA / PORTLAND

# Displacement and Connection

by ELLIOTT YOUNG | Professor of history, Lewis & Clark College, Portland, Oregon

WHEN MOST PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES think of Cuba, they imagine 1950s American cars, bearded guerilla fighters, and Afro-Cuban women smoking fat cigars. These are the exoticized, frozen-in-time images that American journalists have disseminated for more than half a century, but they miss entirely the dynamic changes occurring on the island and the connections that Cuba has always had with the rest of the world.

As one of the first outposts of the Spanish empire in the Americas, Cuba has been at the crossroads of imperial trade and military expansion. It is from this island that Hernán Cortés launched his conquest of the Aztec empire in Mexico in 1519. In spite of its lack of gold and silver and the absence of settled indigenous empires like that of the Aztec, Maya, or Inca, Cuba was the roaring economic engine of the Spanish-American colonies. Fueled by African slaves who cut sugar cane and farmed tobacco, Cuba's economy outpaced all of Latin America and was even stronger than that of the British North American colonies and the United States.

In the late nineteenth century, Cubans fought a thirty-year war to liberate themselves from Spanish colonial rule, but at the last moment the US intervened, turning a war of national liberation into a division of spoils between imperial powers. At the Treaty of Paris in 1898, Spain relinquished Cuba, and the nearly all of its remaining imperial possessions, including Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, to the United States. Cubans were cut out of the peace negotiations and for the next sixty years they lived under the shadow of the colossus to the north.

On New Year's Eve 1958, the US-backed dictator Batista fled to the Dominican Republic on an airplane with 300 million dollars filched from the Cuban treasury. Fidel Castro and his band of plucky guerillas took over waving red and black flags, promising democracy and equality. In 1959, Fidel promised to cut his beard when he fulfilled his promise of good government; after fifty-plus years of revolution, the beard remains unshaven and the aging Castro brothers are still at the helm.

The US imposed a crippling economic embargo on Cuba in 1960, made repeated attempts to overthrow Castro, and attempted to isolate the country politically from the rest of the world. Yet, through this entire time, Cuba maintained friendly relations with many other countries in the Global South and established close ties to the Soviet Union, which subsidized the island for three decades.

The myth of Cuban isolation is a story we tell ourselves because the US government did everything in its power to keep Americans from traveling to the island to see for ourselves. It's true that Cuban trade to the US was virtually eliminated and that US tourism to the island dwindled, but Cubans have always kept up-to-date with American popular culture and fashion. If anything, Cuban youth are more attuned to Hollywood movies, popular TV shows, and music than the hipster youth in Portland.

*Intersecciones: Havana/Portland* builds an artistic bridge between the two cities and thus helps to erode our isolation from Cuba. However, the idea behind this exhibition was not simply to import undiscovered art frozen in amber from the communist island for art lovers in Portland to appreciate. Rather, we wanted to create a series of exchanges between Havana artists and the people and place of Portland. The result is an unexpected and eclectic meditation on the serendipitous connections between the two cities and two countries.

*Intersecciones* does not shy away from the politics of US-Cuban relations but neither is the whole show dominated by such overt political commentary. The most directly

political piece is Reynier Novo's *The Crystal Kiss* which depicts the portraits of 70 US and Cuban presidents, etched on wine glasses. The shadows cast on the wall reflect strained relations between the two countries, but also the hope for coming together over a glass of wine. Two unmarked wine glasses represent the hope for better and more transparent relations between future presidents.

Novo's piece *Manifest Destiny* from the series *The Weight of the Land* forces us to reflect on the history of US expansionism that has played such a crucial role in Cuba's development. Using software he developed with computer scientists, Novo calculated the volume of the ink used in four treaties and one check that expanded the territory of the US from the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 to the purchase of Alaska in 1867. The black printer's ink squares represent the basic building block of maps and provide a strange correlation to the amount of money used, the quantity of land acquired, and the volume of ink used to draw up the agreements. The military force behind these expansionist "purchases" is present in its absence.

Rafael Villares's tree stump with an image of a lightning bolt links Stumptown (the nickname for Portland) literally and metaphorically with Havana just as it links the grounded nature of tree roots with the ethereal and fleeting presence of a lightning bolt. The tree stump is part of the *ECO* series that includes drawings that illustrate morphological resonances between famous rivers around the world and cracks in Havana's gritty streetscape. Villares not only reminds us that Havana



Yornel Martínez with Jorge Porrata | *P350 Alternative Zines* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka



and Portland are connected, but he asks us to pay attention to the eerie resonances between humans and nature.

Yornel Martínez's *P350* project links Havana's resourcefulness due to scarcity to Portland's more whimsical DIY culture. The lack of access to paper led people in Cuba to use empty "Portland cement" bags to create notebooks. Martínez takes this idea as his inspiration to create zines that he then distributed to artists in Havana. For this show, we have enlisted Portland artists to fill the *P350 Alternative Zines*, creating a collaboration between artists on the eastern and western extremities of the continent. Like his *P350* project, Martínez's movie marquee images link the high culture of Cuban poetry to the space of popular commercial art. Putting poetry in a space reserved for movie advertisements is particularly poignant in Cuba where commercial advertising is virtually absent from the landscape.

Susana Delhante's *We bring it curly* natural hair competition was part of the Havana Biennial in May 2015. For *Intersecciones*, Delhante organized a series of workshops in Portland's African American community to discuss the politics of "natural hair" in Portland and Havana. Although racism exists in both locales, the ways in which racism has historically manifested itself in the US versus Cuba is distinct. Although many discussions of race and racism in academia become abstract, grounding such a conversation in something as seemingly mundane as hairstyles allows a much broader audience to participate.

Delhante's second piece in the show, *American Boy / American Girl*, is a video of the artist asking a "boy" she

met in Germany to translate words she utters in Spanish. The search for meaning amidst mistranslations reflects the displacement of both Delhante, an American girl, and the US American boy who found themselves feeling like strangers in Europe. Similarly, Delhante's video installation *Foundry*, recorded in an ex-munitions factory turned cultural space in Montreal reveals the haunting echoes of the past as the artist's naked body circles the bare factory floor. In all of Delhante's works, there is a gap between the past and the present, between countries, languages and races. The art serves as a way to mediate this difference, building an incomplete bridge where we can see each other and begin to ask questions, even if the answers are not always available.

Adriana Arronte's strangely deformed glass bowls in *Banks (Riberas)* and disfigured forks in her installation *Dinner (Cena)* requires the audience to imagine eating in a setting where the utensils don't quite work. In 1990, a censored Cuban film *Alice in Wonderland* depicted a similar kind of town where the utensils were chained to the table making it almost impossible to eat. Beyond the Cuban context, we all face difficulties communicating. In other settings, Arronte has the audience attempt to eat pasta with her forks and drink wine with her vessels, encouraging a messy intimacy which accompanies all attempts at cross-cultural communication.

When people enter Arronte's insect installation *Change of State (Insectos necrófagos)* in the meditative black box, they witness insects congregating in the light; the audience is drawn to the light with the same kind of magnetism as moths to a flame. US citizens traveling to



Cuba are like Arronte's insects migrating toward the heat and lights of Havana just as the many Cubans making their way to the United States also search out the light. Although we all naturally lean toward the light, when we are in the light, the darkness becomes opaque and we lose sight of what remains in the shadows.

Finally, Elizabet Cerviño's performance *Stand Up or Change Your Posture* reveals the connection of humans to the earth as she was buried in soil and then slowly emerged. The tension in the Hoffman Gallery as the audience watched her being buried slowly reflects the discomfort we have with our connection to nature. When Cerviño finally stood up and freed herself, her white clothes stained with the earthen brown dirt, the tension broke. Taking place in Portland, a place where people are so sensitive to nature and the environment, gave the performance a special resonance. The displaced uprootedness of Villares's tree stump echoed the displaced soil of Cerviño's performance, as well the abstract distillation of territory in Novo's ink representation of US expansionist treaties.

Displacement is at the center of *Intersecciones*, reflecting more than a century of US-Cuban relations and an even longer history of Spanish and British colonialism in the Americas. But more than simply land being taken, a tree uprooted, and a woman being buried in soil, the exhibit reflects the hope for a more transparent future in which Cubans and US citizens can sit down at dinner, break bread, and drink a glass of wine.

If Arronte's installation is any prediction, it will be a messy and difficult dinner, but one in which our America will come to know their América. As José Martí put it in his prescient essay *Nuestra América* in 1892, "The disdain of the formidable neighbor who does not know her is our América's greatest danger, and it is urgent — for the day of the visit is near — that her neighbor come to know her, and quickly, so that he will not disdain her. Out of ignorance, he may perhaps begin to covet her. But when he knows her, he will remove his hands from her in respect."

► EY

HABANA / PORTLAND

# Intersecciones

by Julia Portela Ponce de León

Instituto Superior de Arte de Cuba, Havana, Cuba

*Tiembla una rama  
en el agua: su sombra  
sobre la orilla*

Jorge Braulio Rodríguez

BAJO ESTA DENOMINACIÓN confluyen seis creadores cubanos en Portland. En esta encrucijada los hemos colocado a dialogar, para establecer señales que al mismo tiempo los unan y los distingan. Hay en ellos un ánimo de escritura reflexiva ante la realidad que habitan, palpada con inquietud y una suerte de sosiego donde se trastocan la languidez y la quimera.

Las vibraciones que se generan en los discursos refieren a instancias que discurren por lo social, lo político, lo ético, lo antropológico, a partir de una experimentación que los articula en la utilización de soportes disímiles como la instalación, el performance, la pintura, la fotografía, el cuerpo, el objeto, el collage, el environment, lo escultórico, el reciclaje, el diseño, el video o el dibujo que sirven de medios cuyas fronteras se desvanecen y devienen herramientas metodológicas para externar sus especulaciones.

Susana Delahante | Foundry | 2009. Photo by Dan Kvitka



En todos hay una vocación de entendimiento de su lugar en el planeta, por lo que relatan sus preocupaciones en el tejido que se va estructurando con todo el imaginario y acervo culturales que edificaron la plataforma de lo que hemos sido y somos hoy. Ellos constituyen un grupo de jóvenes formados académicamente en la Universidad de las Artes de Cuba (ISA), y se proyectan en un entorno simbólico que asumen con todas sus bondades y falencias.

La interdisciplinariedad enriquece cada idea concebida. Asimismo, son ganancias, las variaciones sustanciales de las operatorias que en las artes visuales han cedido territorio a diversidad de elementos, sonoros u olfativos como ingredientes constitutivos de las propuestas y han ido ensanchado el espacio creativo que interpela al receptor. Muchas de estas formulaciones tienden a la desmaterialización y a la despersonalización del sujeto, sin embargo, edifican ciertas analogías con configuraciones de organismos vivos. Existe, además, una vuelta a lo micro social que cada artista engendra para su aterrizaje en una naturaleza mayor.

Aun cuando repasen y comenten episodios hostiles de su contexto más cercano y de la contemporaneidad, lo hacen desde una perspectiva muy sensual y sensorial. Toman del reservorio de la Historia del Arte, de la Historia, de la Literatura y mucho del pensamiento oriental que queda al descubierto en el uso de recursos mínimos para el completamiento del gesto, en la huella del tiempo, la infinitud, la trascendencia, la inmanencia, el vacío, el aquí y ahora.

A Adriana Arronte le interesa la redimensión del objeto

para hacer comentarios plurales a partir de las relaciones que instauro con ellos. En ese proceso se ensaña en su materialidad, alterando la función básica para cuestionar la idea del contenidismo en la llamada obra de arte. El objeto se desnaturaliza y la funcionalidad se vacía, la acción de observar o tomar se define en su propia incompletion. La manipulación, la conductividad o la distorsión construyen principios para la comprensión, de igual manera, hace uso de la cita, del lenguaje publicitario, de estilos y tendencias tomando cualquier componente que le permita integrar similitudes para la transmisión del mensaje.

Para Elizabeth Cerviño la práctica artística es reconocida desde un escenario espiritual, físico y contemplativo. Asume el espacio como ámbito para redimensionar la grafía de permanencia que escudriña en cada gesto. Sus piezas hacen gala de una visualidad quebrantable y una marcada ritualidad para estructurar una zona inconclusa donde se narra la acción que se vaporiza en la eternidad. Los materiales descifran el sendero de sus actos que el vacío perfila.

Yornel Martínez tiene una propensión hacia el discernimiento del mundo desde una aproximación más cercana a los preceptos de la cultura oriental. Su poética medida puede ser construida desde la retórica del texto para diseñar lo morfológico, como lo evidencia el uso de caligramas. Utiliza imperceptibles estrategias para hablar de grandes infinitos, cualquier elemento deviene material expresivo para sus indagaciones, el agua, una palabra o la energía pueden remitirnos a lo intangible que define lo inherente de la trascendencia.



La producción de Rafael Villares se propone fundar su noción de paisaje. Nos obliga a recapacitar en la necesidad de comprender el concepto de este género, rebasando el propio campo de donde se forjó su tradición; no sólo, por la imagen que apreciamos, sino, por la manera en que elegimos y delimitamos la mirada. Sus trabajos resultan ordenaciones vivenciales, cartografías que ensayan las ideas para su revelación. El principio de interacción es inherente al paisaje que formula, en el que intenta transformar la observación y el descanso en conducta y experiencia. El interés por el tema es una constante aunque lo utilice como pretexto para platicar de otras contingencias. Subvierte el efecto que producen los sentidos, desautomatizándolos para ser integrados como unicidad.

Susana Pilar Delahante realiza proyectos transdisciplinarios focalizados en el sujeto social aprovechando las conexiones que cimenta entre el arte y la ciencia. La autorreferencialidad viabiliza sus simulaciones simbólicas para criticar la condición discriminatoria hacia la mujer donde asienta un desafío entre la muerte y la violencia. Opera las imágenes reales de sus fotos edificando escenas con sus reminiscencias. La representación de lo real y lo que supone como real, expresa la relevancia de la traza de lo ausente como entidad tangible; la inmanencia en lo psicológico y en los procesos del cuerpo activan la participación del público.

Reynier Leyva manifiesta una atracción por la huella de la Historia desde la memoria y la vacuidad que esta genera; explora la posibilidad de lo imposible, descubre el relato sobre ella. Sus trazados pudieran aproximarse a ciertas aristas de la estética de los ochenta en las artes



Reynier Novo | *The Crystal Kiss* | 2015. Photo by Ted Jack

visuales cubanas por su preocupación en instituir un diálogo crítico de la lectura de la Historia de Cuba mediante disímiles artilugios. Sus acciones se descubren como documentos que reescriben los hechos a través de sospechas, desconciertos y fragancias que nos revelan sus sutilezas.

Ojalá que esta muestra Intersecciones Habana Portland sea una rama en el agua que reviva en su sombra y su latido resuene en las dos orillas.



# Heady Crossroads

by Daniel Duford | Visiting associate professor of art  
Reed College

PLACE NAMES HAVE WEIGHT. The name of a place bears the heft of half-remembered history, rumor; the seduction of a certain song — maybe a locally named dish that is itself a bastardization of the place name's true spirit. Say it and a trail of innuendo flows from each syllable: Havana (or correctly, *La Habana*). What romantic weight is carried on each letter of that word! Sultry, dangerous, revolutionary. A sun parched stew of Spanish, African, and indigenous flavor and sound colors the word. For US citizens it conjures a forbidden place, *terra incognita*. It also conjures the triumph of capitalism set against the picture perfect decay of socialist revolt.

Let's try another word: Portland. Oregon? Not so redolent but on a lot of people's minds. A rain drenched Shangri-la of youthful utopia. A "lifestyle" city. A national punch line thanks to *Portlandia*. It's the end of the line boys, as Woody Guthrie sang in *Oregon Trail*: "Where good rain falls aplenty and the crops and orchards grow." Between those two names — Havana and Portland — is a whole continent and over 500 years of colonial upheaval. The curious pastiche of place names collected through indigenous words, mispronounced European lan-

guages and random settlers' surnames create a rickety bucket full of weighty place names filling the space separating Cuba and Oregon. This is the raucous cacophony of the Americas. In between Havana and Portland is an idea. The idea is an exhibition that features six Havana artists and three Portland curators, one of whom is an artist himself. It is an intersection.

Is there anything headier than an intersection? Crossroads offer the possibility to go one way or another replete with all the consequences. The signposts beckon with those aforementioned place names. Intersections are sites of longing and reunion. Havana is a major international city, but is also intimate and familial. Since our mutual governments have kept us all apart since the fifties it ups the ante on a desire for closeness. When the doors closed between the two nations a cultural break-up occurred — if not the actual separation of whole clans of kin. With the doors opening back up we all want to get to know each other again. The six artists that came to Portland for *Intersecciones: Havana/Portland* created an impromptu family – a constellation of Cuban ex-pats, old and new friends. We stumbled with each other's languages, we reached across the divide, we tried to put a finer point on the inherited weight of the place name.

With the arrival of the six artists the sense of a place becomes more acute, more particular. We get to know individuals and we recognize art practices that are global. The space between the island and the end of the line shrinks with close encounter, but deepens further with familiarity. Words don't translate cleanly, concepts bear similarity but are in fact distinct species as in the fact that birds and bats both fly but one is avian the other mammalian. And so the intersection becomes a site that is cartographic, philosophic, time-based, and most importantly located in the space between two human beings in conversation. The map becomes smudged with contested meaning.



Reynier Novo | *The Weight of the Earth: Manifest Destiny* (detail) | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka

The Marxist conceptualism preferred by ISA (the art school all the artists in the exhibition attended) relies on the written and the spoken word. The concept. This is also the basic currency of contemporary international art. Artists in a provincial city like Portland strive for sophistication by peddling in the same currency. But here's a lesson from *La Habana*. There are two currencies — one for tourists, the CUC (Cuban convertible currency) and one for locals, MN (moneda nacional). They have different values. Some things can only be bought by MN some, by CUC. Some are interchangeable. At the intersection the lowly MN might be more valuable for its exoticism and the CUC worthless. The dollar may be outlawed in Havana but takes on black market urgency. The conceptual nature of the works change value and get all muddled when placed in different contexts. Art is best when it can't quite be pinned down. It operates in the miasma surrounding the known name, the porous word, the leaky concept. This is the business at the intersection.





Adriana Arronte | *Dinner (Cena)* | 2013. Photo by Dan Kvitka



# Adriana Arronte

A FORK SPROUTS TENTRILS. A glass bowl freezes mid splash, its belly tattooed with images of migrating insects. Plastic insects swarm a lit corner in a black room. These incidences are caused by the mutating objects of Adriana Arronte. Unconscious daily things become doorways to transcendence. A bowl whose fluxed lip invites you to drink through a lattice of drips becomes an impossible grail. The arc of liquid to lip is an arduous path. Similarly, cutlery fused with the mandible of an insect or a tangle of fine roots complicate the complacent act of shoveling food into your mouth. But invite you to participate they do. *Cena (Dinner)* and *Banks (Riberas)* implicitly call the viewer to consider the tools of consumption. These tools of everyday camaraderie metamorphose into complicated ritual utensils. Beautiful and well crafted they nevertheless force the viewer to consider the relationship between consumption and social gatherings.

Arronte's objects are vital things. They spring from the conceptual ether but their power lies in thingness. Forks, bowls, and bugs speak to the body. Why does a swarm of bugs disturb so readily? Because bugs are the ultimate dismantlers of our flesh. Insects, especially pollinators, cross all borders and like it or not keep the organic world alive with their billions of beating papery wings. What Arronte achieves with her common objects is a hint at the transmogrification of daily existence. In Cuba daily existence comes in a different shade than most of the United States. Fancy forks might strike an empty plate some days and swarms of tropical insects get to cross borders much easier than a people proud of their heritage but itching for change. The metamorphosis called for is not something prescribed by US plenitude but by an acknowledgement of the contradictory body — the individual body, the political body, and the body of the world.

Adriana Arronte (b. 1980) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Havana, Cuba. In 2006, she graduated from the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), Cuba's pre-eminent art school, and has exhibited widely both in Cuba and abroad. Her work often focuses on the quotidian, taking everyday objects and redeploying them with new or inverted meanings: silver cutlery is reworked into root structures, champagne flutes are twisted and warped into vessels for thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Her work challenges us to reconsider the context of a dinner party, a movie night, or a casual coffee date. Adriana has shown in solo exhibitions at the Galeria Villa Manuela in Havana, Cuba, and Luz & Suarez del Villar in Madrid, Spain. She has participated in group exhibitions locally and internationally, including the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, in San Francisco, the Satu Mare Museum of Art in Romania, the Freies Museum in Berlin, and is included in the collection of the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO).



Adriana Arronte | *Banks (Riberas)* | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka



Adriana Arronte | *Change of State (Insectos necrófagos)* | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka





Elizabet Cerviño | *Stand Up or Change Posture (Llanto de la Ceremonia)* | 2016. Photo by Reynier Novo



# Elizabet Cerviño

TIERRA MADRE. NATIVE SOIL. “Bury me six feet under the ground.” Soil is the stuff where we rest our feet while we stand to look at the sun. Even when we don’t comply, the dirt asks for our body back when we die. Dirt and a human body, these are the basic materials of Elizabet Cerviño’s performances. For Walter Di Maria’s New York *Earth Room* in Soho, dirt is deliberately stripped of romantic connotations. It is treated as an inert object. For fellow Cuban Ana Mendieta, dirt and earth were vessels of homesickness, a humus nest to return to her own native Cuban soil. For Cerviño the dirt falls in between these two poles. She employs a strict regimen of fasting and meditating before a performance. The artist’s presence fills the gallery. When the duration of the performance is over an absence (the shadow of the presence) hovers over the site. Left on the floor is dirt, that primal material, a surrogate body.

For *Stand Up or Change Position*, Cerviño was buried one shovelful at a time. Slowly and inexorably she is obscured. Heavy grains pile around her. Her shoulders and lap fill with drifts of topsoil. Her hair and eyelashes disappear. The performance goes right to the heart of a whole host of abjections and anxieties — that of being buried alive, of dirty skin, of public humiliation. Cerviño’s act falls in line with Buddhist monks who maintain stillness in the face of overt outer distractions. This is a cold immolation. The performance began out of view of the public. When the audience entered she was half buried, the evidence of a cubic yard of topsoil mid-migration. Oscar Guerrero, her assistant, quietly moved the earth until Cerviño was covered. Slowly Cerviño rose like a ghost or a sapling. Left behind in the pile of dirt is the impression of a human body temporarily obscured, once powerfully present and now absent. Eventually the dirt from the performance will be hauled up in buckets and sent back outside, imprinted with a fleeting life force from the other side of the continent.

Elizabet Cerviño (b. 1986) is an artist based in Havana, Cuba, who works in mediums ranging from painting to installation, as well as performance. Her work dwells in the meditative — in interactions mediated through her own body. She utilizes elemental materials such as earth, water, and air, to form compositions that are ephemeral and nuanced. For the 2015 Havana Biennial, she dragged canvases through Havana’s main harbor, created paintings out of the soil and pollution of Cuba’s principal port. A graduate of the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) in 2009, Cerviño has exhibited in solo exhibitions in Havana and participated in group shows locally, and internationally in Scotland and Martinique. She was selected for the principle exhibition at the 12th International Havana Biennial in 2015, and completed a residency at the Henry Moore Foundation in Glasgow, Scotland in 2010.



Elizabet Cerviño with Oscar Guerrero | *Stand Up or Change Posture (Llanto de la Ceremonia)* | 2016. Photo by Reynier Novo



Elizabet Cerviño | *Stand Up or Change Posture (Llanto de la Ceremonia)* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka





Susana Delahante | *Foundry* | 2009. Photo by Rafael Villares

# Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo

ROOTS FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THIS EXHIBITION: actual, decorative, and metaphorical. Delahante's performances, videos, and interventions call attention to two different kinds of root. The first is the ancestral root. Delahante's explorations of her Afro-Cuban heritage seek to legitimize roots that extend back to the savage history of slavery. African culture has strong roots in contemporary Cuba and yet, despite official proclamations, deep-seated racism persists in post-Revolutionary Havana. Delahante engages another meaning of the root, the hair root, by staging a natural hair contest for the 2015 Havana Biennial. *Lo Llevamos Rizo* or *We bring it curly* celebrates the ways in which women of African descent wear their hair.

Her body figures prominently in earlier works such as *Foundry* and *American Boy / American Girl*. Delahante becomes a prominent player in her own video work. *Foundry* hints at the meaning of displaced roots. While in residency at The Foundry in Montreal, Quebec, Delahante found herself in a landscape that was the exact opposite of her Caribbean home. While working in the repurposed munitions factory in the middle of winter, she decided to tackle the cold by disrobing and walking naked through the frigid industrial space. The resulting video projected onto hanging vertical panels records Delahante's thumping feet as she pounds through the echoing space. The viewer can walk through the fractured video moving in step with the artist.

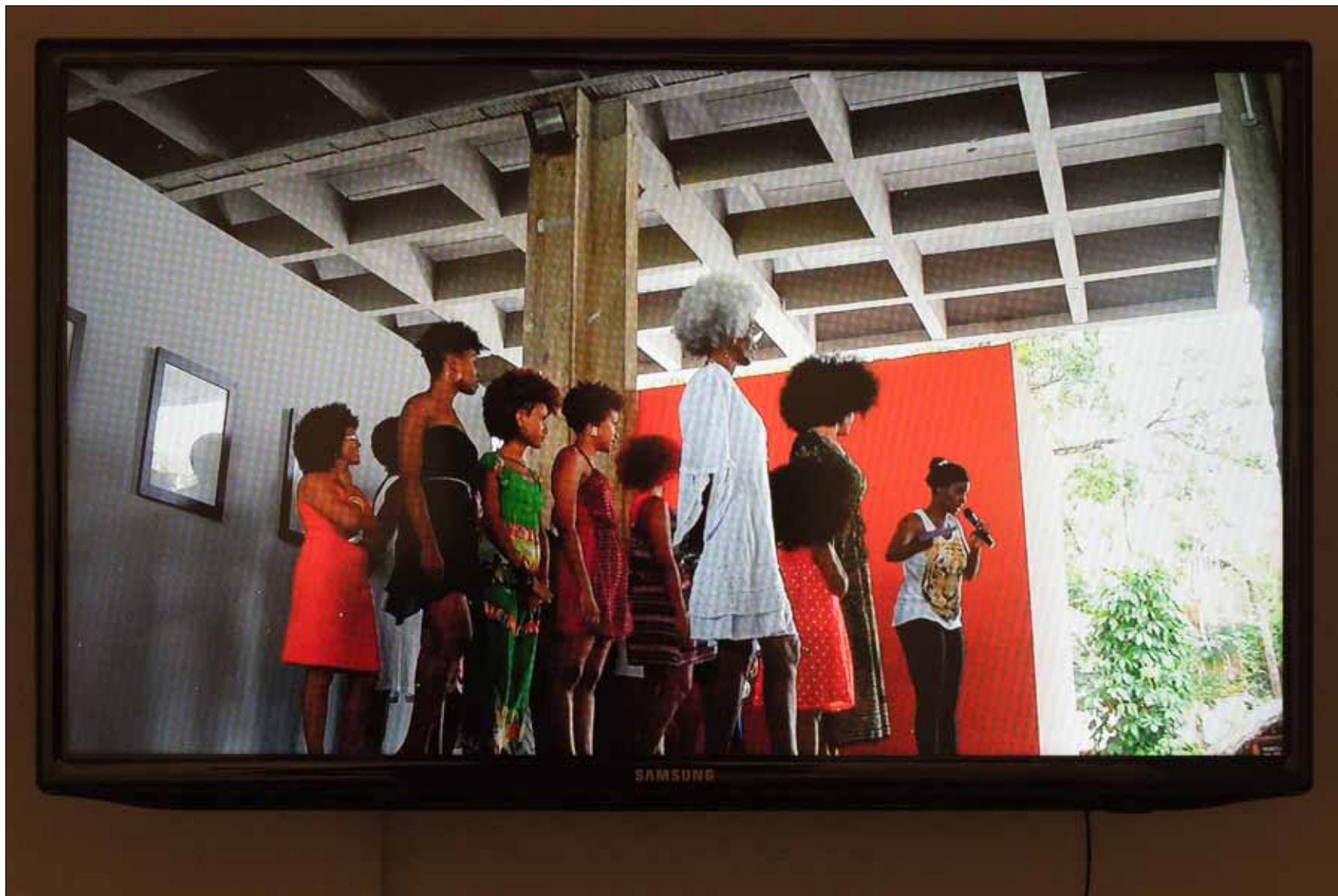
In Portland, Delahante planted seeds that may someday link Havana and Portland more closely. Portland is one of the whitest cities in America. The small African-American community has recently been embattled by another wave of capital displacing traditionally black neighborhoods. In a collaboration with Portland artist Sharita Towne, Delahante began the delicate work of staging a Portland version of *We bring it curly*. At what point do we see how the various root systems intertwine in one familial root ball shooting up from the earth of Latin American to North America.

Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo (b. 1984) lives and works in Havana, Cuba. After graduating from the Instituto Superior de Arte in 2008, she received a scholarship to pursue postgraduate studies in New Media at the Karlsruhe University of Art and Design. Susana draws elements of performance, social practice, video art, and installation into her practice. She examines the power systems formed through the turbulent, often violent, intersections of gender, race, and class. Her work ranges from the very personal to the public, looking at violence against women through the lens of Havana's morgues to the Best Natural Afro contest held at Havana's 12th International Biennial. Delahante has been an artist in residence at the Art Centre Darling Foundry in Montreal, and the MAP Residency in Holland. She has shown in solo exhibitions at Zalle Cero, Havana, Cuba, and at the Villa de Bank, Enschede, Netherlands, and has participated in international group exhibitions, including the 12th International Havana Biennial and at the Cuban Pavilion at the 56th International Venice Biennial.



Susana Delahante | *American Girl / American Boy* | 2013. Photo by Dan Kvitka





Susana Delahante | *We bring it curly* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka



Yornel Martínez with Jorge Parrata | *P350 Alternative Zines* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka

# Yornel J. Martínez Elías

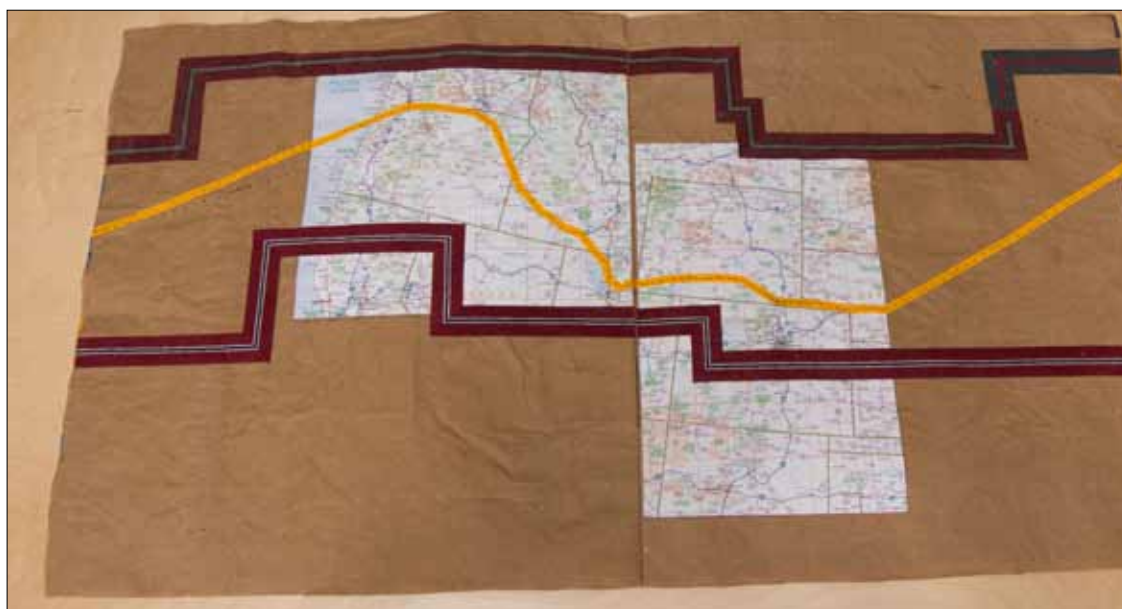
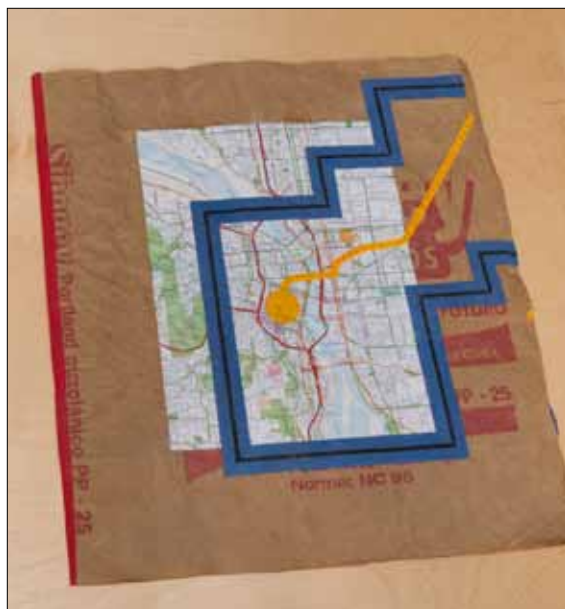
IF THERE IS AN ART FORM THAT IS THE STOCK AND TRADE of Portland, it is the zine. Roughhewn and independent, the zine is the mouthpiece of the microeconomy. Originally zines came out of punk, small missives churned out from neighborhood copy stores. Yornel Martínez makes zines too, but of a distinctly Cuban kind. Martínez's *revistas* are made from scavenged Portland cement bags. Cement is a major building material in Cuba. Martínez saves the bags, irons them and then binds them into the polar opposite of glossy art magazines. In a move reminiscent of the punk scene in Portland, he hands the blank *revistas* to fellow artists. Artists get their own DIY monograph. Often the result is bawdy and off-color, full of winks and nudges known only to Havana cognoscenti. Martínez's work comes out of the fact of resource scarcity in contemporary Cuba. The scrubby approach to bookmaking typifies much contemporary Cuban art — high concept meets scrappy material use.

Portland artists contributed work for *P350 Alternative Zines*. Maria Inocencio and Mark Richardson Smith created a fabric collage trail on maps to connect Portland and Havana; Jess Perlitz and Emily Squires collaged the *revista* using a week's worth of *New York Times*; wooden type printer Tracy Schlapp and Samiya Bashir excerpted Bashir's poem "Map 1" and printed the text into the book. Native Cuban and Portland artist Jorge L. Porrata combined printed and found images.

Martínez's investment in words carries to his series of marquee interventions. Poems appear on iconic Havana cinema marquees. The only evidence of the intervention exists in postcards in which the first subject seems to be the marquee itself until it becomes clear that a line of modernist poetry is what's playing. The zine and the cinema, books and movies — these aspects of urban culture deeply define both Havana and Portland. If the cement in the bags is used to build the physical city, the bags are now turned into the building blocks of the city's imagination.

Yornel J. Martínez Elías (b. 1981) is a painter, photographer, and mixed media artist. Although his work is inherently visual, it is language and poetry that preoccupy his compositions, where he aims to create "an image that turns tangible the inexplicable." His works often leaps off the canvas or page and into sculpture and even public interventions that create situations for language to grow and change. Martínez is also the creator of an ongoing art publication, known as *P350*. Recycled concrete bags are turned into blank pages for artists to take over. Each issue is a unique work by a different artist, creating a global network of participants that have contributed to a very singular collection. Martínez graduated from the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) in 2007, and currently lives and works in Havana, Cuba. He has exhibited locally and internationally, including the selection for the 12th International Havana Biennial.





Yornel Martínez with Jess Perlitz and Emily Squires (above) and Maria Inocencio and Mark Richardson Smith (below) | *P350 Alternative Zines* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka





Reynier Novo | *The Crystal Kiss* (detail) | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka



# Reynier Leyva Novo

I BEGAN THIS SECTION OF THE CATALOG WITH THE QUESTION: “What is the weight of a place name?” Reynier “El Chino” Novo asks, “What is the weight of history?” Working with computer programmers, Novo created software that measures the exact amount of ink needed to print a certain amount of words. Combing through historical documents including treaties and land purchases, Novo reveals exactly the amount of ink required to acquire large swaths of sovereign land. Impassive black squares of printer’s ink on the gallery wall attest to the opaqueness of such land grabs. Manifest Destiny needs the pen as much as the sword to roll along the continent. Novo accompanies the treaty squares with a before and after map of the United States during this period of expansion. The country swells like a mosquito full of blood from one end of the century to the other.

Novo presents these historic nuggets with deadpan aplomb. *The Weight of the Earth: Manifest Destiny* could be a particularly oblique infographic. Likewise *The Crystal Kiss* and *The Crystal Kiss II* present common stemware wine glasses etched with a lineage of US and Cuban presidents. Novo’s language is not the earthiness of his peers but the slick hands-off sheen of the global designer. *The Crystal Kiss* consists of a 27 foot-long shelf of wine glasses. It presents a contra conga line with US presidents facing Cuban presidents. Cuba has long been a jewel desired by the US. It was always hoped to be absorbed through Manifest Destiny. The glasses become an occasion for a toast — a truce to get on with history. In other contexts, like Arronte, Novo encourages viewers to drink from the glasses. They become twice kissed. The first are the presidents themselves kissing when the glasses clink, the second comes from the lips of the drinker, drinking to the extraordinary weight of history, a continent as heavy as the world itself.

The work of Reynier Leyva Novo (b. 1983) draws elements of history into the present through the poetic abstraction of historical documents, objects, and places. For the 2011 Venice Biennial, Novo created unique perfumes responding to descriptions of battlefields written by commanders during the Cuba Revolutionary War. His most recent work, *El Peso de la Historia*, calculates the weight of the ink used to write important documents from Cuban history, translating the ink into large, black squares. Novo studied at the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes San Alejandro, and the Centro Experimental de Artes José Antonio Díaz Peláez. He has exhibited widely in Cuba and internationally, including the 2011 Venice Biennial, the Museo MARTE, El Salvador, the 2010 Liverpool Biennial, and the National Hispanic Center Art Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His work is included in numerous collections including the Pizzuti Collection and the Farber Collection. He currently lives and works in Havana, Cuba.





Reynier Novo | *The Crystal Kiss II* | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka



Reynier Novo | *The Weight of the Earth: Manifest Destiny* (detail) | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka



Rafael Villares | *ECO #10* | 2016. Photo by Dan Kvitka

# Rafael Villares

IMAGINE A LIGHTNING FLASH OVER A HOT HAVANA summer night. The arterial tongues of electricity flick once and then inexplicably re-appear among the rings of a fir stump in Portland, Oregon. That is the image of Rafael Villares's *ECO #10*, a huge stump displaced from the Lewis & Clark garden into the gallery. Sitting up on the concrete floor, its roots like the tentacles of a petrified octopus, the stump's resinous smell fills the space with its fragrance. It was not an easy thing to manipulate. Using inadequate tools on a too wet stump, Villares carved out the small depression for the image of lightning. The wet wood resisted, wood being a material that declines to lay down easily for the sake of concept. To quote woodworker Peter Korn, "You can't bullshit a chisel." And Villares didn't — even if the wood pulped into a soft, glutinous mess while he coaxed out the space needed to displace an image. The stump is the most laborious of found objects. It required great labor, an agreement really between object and artist. The lightning image conforms to and reframes the roots. Magic occurred. Lightning broke in Havana and landed a continent away.

Villares's displaced landscapes create instances of territorial déjà vu. Photographs of cracks in Havana walls become secret maps to the Tigris or the Thames. Villares conjures territory through place names and incidental cracks knitting the whole world together. The world is united not necessarily through airplanes and the internet, but the decay of concrete buildings and the upheaval of sidewalks. In the microscopic the grand appears. *ECO #10* is a fitting piece to encounter when first entering the gallery. The trees in Cuba have above-ground root systems. In an earlier similar piece in Havana the roots were suspended from the ceiling. In Portland the stump was too heavy for the gallery structure. These Pacific Northwest trees do their business below the loam in the dark and wet. The water weight alone makes the stump impossible to hang. Through artistic sleight of hand Villares made the subterranean light and dry, and sky-born electricity ponderous and slow.

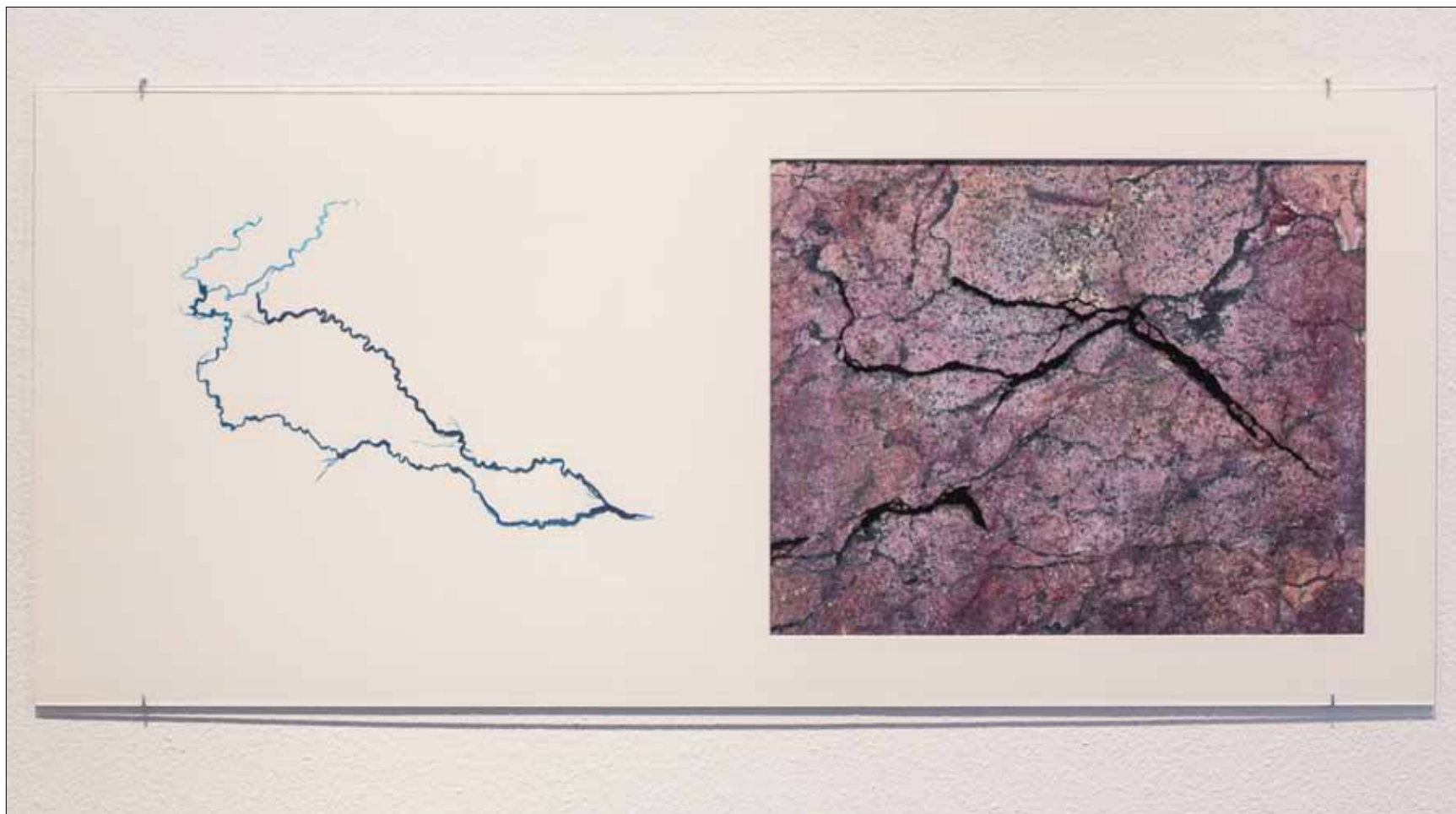
► DD

Rafael Villares (b. 1989) is an interdisciplinary artist working in photography, installation, and mixed media. His work often looks at the landscape of the built and natural environments. Through photography, sound, and installation, Rafael inverts certain aspects of our surroundings, taking the sounds of the Havana streets into a nearby forest, or creating a larger-than-life planter with a park bench and tree, that can be moved from location to location by means of a truck and crane. Rafael currently lives and works in Havana, Cuba. Having just finished graduate studies at the Instituto Superior de Arte, Rafael has had solo exhibitions in Havana, including a large scale installation along Havana's Malecón sea wall during the 2012 Havana Biennial. He has participated internationally in group exhibitions at the Chazen Museum in Madison, Wisconsin, and with Sandra Montenegro Contemporary Art in Bogota, Colombia, and in Miami, Florida.





Rafael Villares | *ECO #4* | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka



Rafael Villares | *ECO #7* | 2015. Photo by Dan Kvitka



# Object list

## ADRIANA ARRONTE

*Banks (Riberas)*

2015

Glass

Variable dimensions

*Change of State (Insectos necrófagos)*

2015

Plexiglas installation

Overall installation: 12 x 20 x 14 feet

*Dinner (Cena)*

2013

Nickel silver

Variable dimensions

## ELIZABET CERVIÑO

*Stand Up or Change Posture (Llanto de la Ceremonia)*

2016

Performance with earth

*Chant of the Ceremony (Llanto de la Ceremonia)*

2014

Linen and cork tree resin

47.25 x 92.25 inches

## SUSANA PILAR DELAHANTE MATIENZO

*We bring it curly*

2016

A competition of natural hair (video) 13:02 minutes

*American Girl / American Boy*

2013

Video projection in collaboration with Ben Newton

3:54 minutes

*Foundry*

2009

Video projection 4:37 minutes

Overall installation: 12 x 9 x 14 feet

## YORNEL J. MARTÍNEZ ELÍAS

*P350 Alternative Zines*

2012–2016

Found Portland cement bags and mixed media

Variable dimensions

*Exergo*

2012 – 2014

Public intervention at five cinemas in Havana, Cuba:

Acapulco Cinema, La Rampa Cinema

Payret Cinema, Riviera Cinema, Yara Cinema

4 x 6 inches each

## REYNIER LEYVA NOVO

*The Weight of the Earth: Manifest Destiny*

2016

Lithographic ink on wall  
18 by 208 inches

*The Crystal Kiss*

2015

Etched glass  
11 x 302.75 x 10.25 inches

Courtesy of Galleria Continua, Havana, Cuba

*The Crystal Kiss II*

2015

Etched glass  
12 x 16 x 16 inches

Courtesy of Lisa Sette Gallery, Phoenix, Arizona

## RAFAEL VILLARES

*ECO #10*

2016

Photograph of a lightning bolt in Havana, Cuba; tree  
root from Lewis & Clark College campus,

Portland, Oregon

Root fragment and light box

6 x 8 x 8.5 inches

*ECO #4*

The Thames River in Monte Street No. 9e / Egido and  
Zulueta, Havana, Cuba

2015

Photograph and ink drawing

17 x 39 inches

*ECO #5*

The Nile River in San Ignacio Street / Obrapía and  
Lamparilla, Havana, Cuba

2015

Photograph and ink drawing

20.5 x 32 inches

*ECO #7*

The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Central Park,  
Havana, Cuba

2015

Photograph and ink drawing

17.25 x 39 inches





# Acknowledgements

FIRST AND FOREMOST, my deep thanks are offered to Adriana Arronte, Elizabet Cerviño, Yornel J. Martínez Elías, Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo, Reynier “El Chino” Novo, and Rafael Villares for bringing their vision to the Hoffman Gallery at Lewis & Clark College. It was an honor to work with six of Cuba’s most important emerging artists.

Julia Portela Ponce de León, curator, art historian, and faculty member of the Instituto Superior de Arte, opened sixteen doors for us in Havana, introducing us to extremely talented and innovative young Cuban artists. *A Julia, besos y gracias por tu orientación suave a través del surrealism tropical.*

As has been mentioned previously, *Intersecciones: Havana/Portland* was largely inspired by the innovative projects pursued by three Lewis & Clark alumni, Samuel Ashman ’12, Spencer Byrne-Seres ’13, and Drew Lenihan ’12. Spencer traveled to Havana with Daniel Duford and me, and provided invaluable insights and logistical assistance. Stuart A. Ashman, president and CEO of the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, California, was also helpful in the initial development of the exhibition.

Thank you to the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, Washington, for offering a residency to Adriana Arronte in which she was able to further investigate the use of glass as a component in her installation work. Louisa Raitt translated for Adriana on the hot shop

floor, a tremendous aid to the success of Adriana’s residency.

Many works in *Intersecciones* were made here on the Lewis & Clark College campus, with the assistance of several students who generously volunteered time and talent to the realization of this exhibition. Lewis & Clark College students Jack Badler, Bridgette Hickey, Camilla Radoyce, Jack Sanders, August Stanley, Liza Tugangui, and Elizabeth Valadez helped with the making, installation, and documentation of several works in the exhibition. Reed College students Oscar Guerrero and Camila Medina Mora worked closely with Elizabet Cerviño on the execution and documentation of her performance.

Several Portland artists or artist teams contributed to Yornel Martínez’s *P350 Alternative Zines* project by filling blank books that will be returned to Cuba. Maria Inocencio and Mark Richardson Smith; Jess Perlitz and Emily Squires; Jorge L. Porrata; and Tracy Schlapp and Samiya Bashir shared their creative talents with this collaboration. Zulema Young Toledo recorded the entire exhibition process in a video documentary, *Nuestras Americas*.

Portland artist and Pacific Northwest College of Art faculty member Sharita Towne was enormously generous with her talents, time, and network to advance the conversation around natural hair in collaboration with Susana Delahante Martienzo. Sharita created a dynamic panel for the *We bring it curly* workshop at

PCC Cascade. Thank you panelists Kim Cameron Dominguez, Lewis & Clark visiting assistant professor of sociology and anthropology; Lisa Jarett, James DePriest visiting professor of art at Portland State University; Lewis & Clark student Bridgette Hickey; and stylist Sah’Rah Kelsey Bey. And thank you, Oregon State Senator Ron Wyden for stepping in to support Susana’s travel visa application.

Ananda DeMello assisted Reynier Novo in the installation of his works. Thank you to Luisa Asuenda and Galleria Continua, Havana, for loaning Novo’s *The Glass Kiss*, and to Lisa Sette, Lisa Sette Gallery, Phoenix, for loaning *The Crystal Kiss II*.

One of the most compelling works in the exhibition is Rafael Villares’s *ECO #10*, a sculpture created out of the stump and root wad of a tree removed from the campus grounds not far from the Hoffman Gallery. Bradley Ashwell, grounds manager on the staff of Facilities Services, took on the heroic challenge of locating and preparing the tree stump for Rafael’s work. Thank you, Bradley, for your support of this unusual request! Nick Seagraves, the crew of Seagraves Landscape Service, and John Tesner of Tesner Structural Engineers also contributed to the efforts of recycling the tree stump into sculpture. Richard Austin from Facilities Services aided considerably as well.

Patrick Ryall, director of IT operations, and Linda Thompson, events AV coordinator, came to the rescue for several technical challenges. Thank you, Patrick and Linda for your generous collegiality. Justin Counts, educational technology specialist, also assisted with on-the-fly technical needs. Vanessa Holmgren, director of multimedia and internal communications; Amy Drill, art director; Shelly Meyer, *Chronicle* editor; Michael Mannheimer, web content producer; and Caitlin Peel, assistant director of marketing, contributed to public awareness of this exhibition. Thank

you, Adrian Miller, for translating Julia Portela’s essay into English.

To Lewis & Clark alumna Tracy Schlapp ’87 — words fail. Tracy not only designed the logo for *Intersecciones* and this exhibition catalog, she was a tireless supporter and invested participant in the development of the exhibition from start to finish. Thank you, Tracy!

The installation of *Intersecciones* was expertly carried out by Mark Johnson, Graham Bell, and Susan Griswold. Framing Resource, Signs Now, Thom Ross Furniture and Fixtures, and Dan Kvitka Photography provided indispensable services. I hope that you all know how indebted I am to your friendship and faithful services.

*Intersecciones* is the product of a curatorial collective, including Daniel Duford, visiting associate professor of art at Reed College; Elliott Young, professor of history at Lewis & Clark; and me. To Daniel and Elliott, I offer my deepest gratitude for your insights and thoughtful contributions to this project.

The exhibition represents many partnerships and collaborations between institutions and funding agencies. The NEH Film and Lecture Fund supported programming. Reed College appropriated funding for the artists to travel to Portland.

Finally, this exhibition catalog would not have been possible without a generous grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Council. Thank you, RACC, for providing resources for institutions like the Hoffman Gallery to present compelling exhibitions and catalogs to our community.

Linda Tesner, director of the Hoffman Gallery

*Intersecciones: Havana/Portland*

January 28 — March 13, 2016

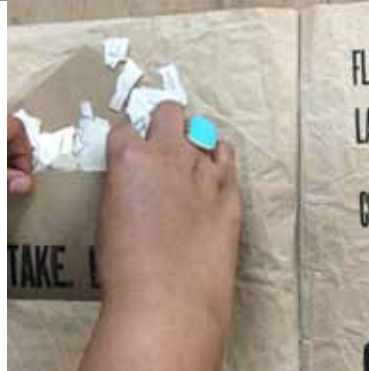
Ronna and Eric Hoffman

Gallery of Contemporary Art

Lewis & Clark College

0615 SW Palatine Hill Road

Portland, Oregon 97219



© 2016 Lewis & Clark College

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Exhibition curators: Linda Tesner, Elliot Young, and Daniel Duford

Essays: Linda Tesner, Elliot Young, Julia Portela Ponce de León, and Daniel Duford

Catalog design: Tracy Schlapp of Cumbersome Multiples

Photography: Soulayvanh Biesel, Ted Jack, Dan Kvitka, Reynier Novo, and Rafael Villares

Poet Samiya Bashir loads the "Take. Eat." envelope with words as part of her collaboration with Yornel Martínez | *P350 Alternative Zines* | 2016. Photo by Tracy Schlapp



Regional Arts & Culture Council

