

Spring 2-28-1997

Guido Llinas and Los Once After Cuba

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Guido Llinás and Los Once After Cuba



The Art Museum
AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Miami, Florida

Guido Llinás and Los Once After Cuba

February 28 - April 2, 1997



Antonio Vidal, *Sagua de Tánamo*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 28 x 35 1/4".

Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Curated by
Dahlia Morgan, Director

Essays by Juan A. Martínez, Ph.D.
and
Cristoph Singler

The Art Museum

AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

University Park, PC 110, S.W. 107th Ave. & 8th St.

Miami, Florida 33199 (305) 348-2890

Director's Foreword

Guido Llinás and Los Once after Cuba is the first major retrospective in America of the exiled Cuban artist Guido Llinás. Llinás was a founding member of the historic Cuban group *Los Once* (The Eleven) formed in early 1953. Llinás was the pioneer of abstraction in Cuba and the Caribbean. He and the other members of *Los Once* were directly inspired by the American Abstract Expressionist movement. Through *Los Once*, Llinás and other artists such as Hugo Consuegra, Antonio Vidal, Tomás Oliva, Raúl Martínez, gave birth to a wider concept of visual expression in Cuba. Prior to *Los Once*, modernism in Cuba had never gone beyond figuration. This exhibition will establish a scholarly link between American Abstract Expressionism and its branches in Latin America.

Living in Paris since 1963, Guido Llinás combined the spontaneity and aggressive brushwork of Abstract Expressionism with signs and symbols from his own Afro-Cuban roots. He continues to draw his symbolism from the Afro-Cuban Abakua religion. He has exhibited throughout Europe and Latin America.

This retrospective will acquaint our viewers with the full range of Llinás' vision and sensibility, and will continue our program mission of mounting retrospective exhibitions in Miami of prominent artists from North and South America. The Art Museum serves a dynamic and diverse community in Dade county - a metropolis of over 2 million with a growing population of Hispanic immigrants from diverse Latin American countries. The Art Museum has been collecting key examples of Latin American art for the past 17 years. Within this context, the retrospective of such an important Latin American artist complements our mission.

I would like to acknowledge the special contribution of my colleague in the Visual Arts Department art historian Juan A. Martínez, Ph.D. Professor Martínez generously devoted his time and

scholarship to the project and wrote an insightful essay on Llinás and the *Los Once* group for this catalogue. I also gratefully acknowledge the participation of art historian Christoph Singler of the University of Franche-Comte, France who gave freely of his time and expertise to produce the essay on Guido Llinás. Both essays contribute extensively to the knowledge of contemporary Latin American art history.

I would like to extend a special thanks to the artist, Guido Llinás for the time and effort he contributed to this splendid exhibition. It has been a pleasure to work with him.

I would like to thank the Museum's dedicated staff: Regina C. Bailey, Assistant Director, who participated in every aspect of the organization and planning of the exhibition; Edward Russo, Registrar, for designing and overseeing the exhibition installation as well as facilitating the transportation, insurance, and loans of the works of art; Kim Stillwell, Assistant Registrar, organizational and administrative skill and assistance; Mercy Advocat, Office Manager/Membership, for overseeing all events related to the exhibition; Ivan Reyes, Program Assistant, for assisting with financial concerns; and Martin Amado, Museum Assistant, for his contribution to all facets of the Museum's operation.

Especially, I would like to thank the State of Florida Department of State, the Division of Cultural Affairs through the Florida Arts Council; the Metropolitan Dade County Cultural Affairs Council; the Metropolitan Dade County Board of County Commissioners; the Cowles Charitable Trust; the James Deering Danielson Foundation; the Green Family Foundation and the Friends of The Art Museum for their continuing support.

This project, however, would not have been possible without the generosity of the institutions and private individuals who are listed as lenders to the exhibition.

Dahlia Morgan, Director

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The *Los Once* Group and Cuban Art in the 1950s

The group of Cuban vanguard artists known as *Los Once* (The Eleven) is one of the most often mentioned and least known movements in twentieth century Cuban art. Although it is widely agreed that this group of painters and sculptors introduced new ideas and practices into Cuban art at mid-century, namely non-figurative art, its existence is barely recorded in a handful of catalogues, some journalistic articles, and brief entries in a few books on Cuban art. Considering the lack of a coherent narrative of this group's development and the absence of a discourse on its significance in Cuban art, the following is an art historical sketch of *Los Once* with comments on its contributions to contemporary Cuban art.¹

I

Around 1950, a new generation of artists emerged in Havana, many of whom joined the international trend towards abstraction following World II. These young artists entered an art world that was small and crowded. The art scene in Havana at mid-century was dominated by modernist artists from two congenial generations, one that emerged in 1927 and the other around 1938. The modernists had replaced a weak academic tradition with a more original and dynamic art, which actively appropriated European artistic models to interpret Cuban culture. In the process they succeeded for the first time in inserting the art of the island on the international cultural map. As expected, they were privileged by most of the few art institutions, spaces, and critics of that time. The rest of the reduced artistic scene was occupied by the academic artists, who controlled Cuba's official art school, known as the Academia de San Alejandro, and exhibited at the Círculo de Bellas Artes. The need to open a space for themselves in these circumstances provided the initial impetus for the formation of *Los Once*.

The genesis of this first organized movement in Cuban art is a matter of debate. Nevertheless, its origins can be traced to three exhibitions in the early 1950s. One of the leading organizers of *Los Once*, Guido Llinás, brought together in 1952 a number of emerging artists like himself, Antonia Eiriz, Manuel

Vidal, his brother Antonio Vidal, and Fayad Jamís, organizing an exhibition entitled *Young Art*. The exhibition was held at the cultural center of the Confederation of Cuban Workers, a space, which like this group of artists, was on the fringes of then Cuba's high culture. From that exhibition, Llinás, Antonio Vidal, and Jamís went on to become founding members *Los Once*, while Eiriz and Manolo Vidal, who followed different artistic paths, became "honorary members" of the group. The *Young Art* exhibition was soon followed by a drawing show entitled *Fifteen Young Painters and Sculptors*, held at Sociedad Cultural Nuestro Tiempo, the most progressive cultural association in 1950s Havana. This exhibition, organized by the sculptor Tomás Oliva and the poet Rolando Escardó, already included most of the artists who would integrate *Los Once*. Not all of the fifteen artists who were invited to participate sent works, so the title of the exhibition and the catalogue do not correspond with the actual number of artists in the show. This is prophetic of things to come. Only the original exhibition, which gave the group its name, had eleven participants. Contrary to its name, the actual number of members in the group constantly fluctuated.

The formal launching of the group took place in April 18, 1953 with the exhibition *Eleven Painters and Sculptors* at La Rampa, a commercial center in Havana. The exhibition, which was organized by Llinás and Oliva, was sponsored by the Directory of Culture, an agency of the Ministry of Education. The exhibition included the painters Rene Avila (b.1926), José I. Bermudez, Hugo Consuegra (b. 1929), Viredo Espinosa, Fayad Jamís (1930-1988), Guido Llinás (1923), and Antonio Vidal (b. 1928) as well as the sculptors Francisco Antigua (b.1920-?), Agustín Cárdenas (b. 1927), José A. Díaz Peláez (b.1924-?), and Tomás Oliva (1930-1996). A modest catalogue with an introduction by the art critic Joaquín Texidor accompanied the show. Texidor, who became the group's first champion, lauded the new abstract artists as being "happily far from naturalistic representation, which allows them to be part of their times and of the future." Here was Cuba's new avant-garde.

According to the eleven photographs printed in the catalogue, about half of the works had still traces of figuration while the other half was completely non-figurative; the latter works being those of Avila, Consuegra, Llinás, and Vidal. As a movement, they went further into abstraction than the two previous generations of modernists artists. Those generations had assimilated a gamut of modern European art, but they did not care for non-objective art. Up to 1950 Amelia Peláez, Wifredo Lam, and Mario Carreño, the Cuban modernists who had ventured the most into abstraction, had not gone beyond cubism. The 1950s generation, and *Los Once* in particular, experimented with different forms of post-cubist abstraction, including adaptations of abstract expressionism, informalism and concrete art. The shift in modern Cuban art towards abstraction at mid-century responded to a number of external and internal factors, including the influence of international (mostly North American) artistic trends, the exhaustion of traditional Cuban narratives and symbols, and a turbulent political situation. The last two factors—inheriting over twenty years of intense exploration of national themes and symbols in art (1927-1950), and living through one of the country's worse political crisis—seem to have encouraged introspection, a look at the self rather than at the nation.²

The exhibition *Eleven Painters and Sculptors* was well received in the local press. "They are experienced, lack in naiveté, and are struggling to assert themselves... They have come to substitute, in the discussions of [our] small art world, the values of the 1937 generation... They are what is actual," commented Luis Dulzaides Noda, in the periodical *Gente*.³ "The exhibition in its totality is admirable and we find among its participants those figures who will set the character of our art in the near future," wrote Gladys Lauderman for *El Mundo*.⁴ Cuba's first magazine dedicated solely to the arts, *Noticias del Arte* gave it a supportive feature article, reproducing all of the works in the exhibition catalogue.⁵ With La Rampa exhibition and its press coverage, *Los Once* achieved their initial goal of making themselves known as a new force in Cuban art. This was reinforced by the fact that almost simultaneous with the exhibition in La Rampa, they had a drawing exhibition in Galería Matanzas, making their debut in two cities at once. The Matanzas exhibition, for

which Texidor also wrote the introduction essay, included fifteen artists, underscoring the ever changing membership of the group.

The momentum gathered by these exhibitions consolidated the group effort and led to six more collective shows in the next two years.⁶ The most ambitious of these were held at the Lyceum, in which Raúl Martínez (1927-1995) replaced Bermudez who went to live in the United States, and at the Círculo de Bellas Artes. The Lyceum exhibition took place in November 1953, with Martí's statement "A revolution of forms is a revolution of essences" as its leitmotif. The implications in this statement for the leading role of art in radical social change was not lost to *Los Once*. Interestingly, the group made its debut three months before the historic date of July 26, 1953, when the revolutionary movement of that name erupted in the national scene with a bold attack on the Moncada military barrack. The Lyceum, founded in 1929 by a group of progressive women, was Havana's oldest and most respected alternative cultural space. Since its inception it acted as the primary exhibition venue for modern Cuban art and to some extent it was the bastion of the older modernists. *Los Once's* exhibition there represented their arrival at the center of Havana's vanguard cultural elite. Like their previous exhibition at La Rampa, this one was widely and positively commented in the local press by Dulzaides Noda, Lauderman, and Adela Jaume.

Whereas their representation at the Lyceum was not that surprising, given that institution's customary support for new art, their 1954 exhibition at the Círculo de Bellas Artes was unexpected because of that association's entrenched conservatism and close ties with academic art. According to Consuegra, they wanted to exhibit there because the building was "in the heart of the city, much more accessible to the people... than the elite who frequented the Lyceum," and they also "thought that it would be symbolic to present the extreme vanguard in the sanctuary of the rear-guard."⁷ Be that as it may, he asserts that it was "the most ambitious exhibition of the group, the most numerous in works of art, and the best organized until then," except for the absence of Oliva, Díaz Peláez, and Viredo.⁸ The first two were traveling in Europe at the time of the exhibition, and Viredo failed to send works at the last minute, which caused his expulsion from the group. The poet José A. Baragaño wrote a

brief, roundabout essay for the catalogue, beginning his collaboration with the group. Like in the case of the Lyceum exhibition, this one received wide press coverage with enthusiastic articles by Mario Carreño, Antonio Hernández Travieso, and Rafael Marquina.

Although *Los Once* was a group apart, it did participate in collective exhibitions with other artists. Three worth mentioning because of their magnitude and inclusiveness are the *Homage to José Martí* exhibition at the Lyceum (1954), the inaugural exhibition for the permanent art gallery of Sociedad Cultural Nuestro Tiempo (1954), and the First University Festival of Contemporary Art (1954). The last one was sponsored by the University of Havana's Student Federation, a very active group whose concerns, historically, had gone beyond academia and the campus of Universidad de la Habana. Artists from all generations and groups were represented in these exhibitions; the *Homage to Martí* show and the First University Festival were also polemic in that they were protest exhibitions against the II Hispanic-American Biennial.

Outside of Havana, *Los Once* exhibited in the cities of Matanzas, Camagüey, and Santiago de Cuba, projecting their art beyond the capital. As a group they held more exhibitions in the interior of the island than their predecessors, tacitly acknowledging the importance of regional centers usually overshadowed by the capital. The sheer number of exhibitions in the brief life of the movement: 1953-55, suggest an intense level of activity on the part of *Los Once* and an unexpected degree of success in opening a space for themselves in the Cuban art world of the 1950s. Commercial success aside, *Los Once* were able in a brief period of time to attain a high level of exposure through varied exhibition venues, which fact undermines their legendary outsider status. Their roster of exhibitions and press coverage also suggest that in Cuba the ideological lines of separation between generations, and even between modernist versus academic artists, were often drawn in the sand.

II

More difficult to assess than *Los Once*'s emergence and presence in the Cuban art world, is the group's ideology and aesthetics. Initially they did not follow a definite set of ideas or style. However, their reunions at the cafe-bars Las Antillas and

Americas in the center of Havana, and at Martínez' house-studio in Carlos III avenue, led to a free exchanged of ideas and strategies. In time, these reunions contributed to the formation of a certain collective ideology and aesthetics. Not the least interesting part of this process or group dynamics is that the main characters—Cárdenas, Consuegra, Llinás, Martínez, Oliva, and Vidal—were extremely varied in social, and in some cases ethnic backgrounds and personalities. The group also included painters and sculptors, who, in Cuban art, had rarely collaborated with one another.

Like their predecessors, they associated with literary friends, who included at one time or another Escardó, Baragaño, Severo Sarduy, Pepe Triana, Abelardo Estorino, Carlos Franqui, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and Edmundo Desnoes. Baragaño, Sarduy, and Desnoes contributed introductory essays to their exhibition catalogues and articles to the press. The group also kept a friendly relationship with a number of outsiders. From their own generation, they were close to the "honorary members" mentioned earlier, and from the preceding generations, they respected Peláez and Lam. Among other things, they liked the art of "Amelia because of the artistic transposition that she made of her house. Wifredo, for his unique interpretation of surrealism, mixing African, European, and Asian cultures."⁹

The relationship of *Los Once*'s to the rest of the Cuban art world is more complex, fluctuating between accommodation and antagonism. As their participation in the aforementioned collective exhibitions suggest, they interacted with a wide gamut of artists on different fronts. However, they could also be hostile to their modernist predecessors and their so-called School of Havana. They believed that early Cuban modernism (1927-1950) was a mere extension of the School of Paris with a superficial Cuban subject matter. They rejected its mostly idealistic, colorful, and poetic view of Cuba.

At times, the tension between *Los Once* and their modernist predecessors went from the expected generation gap to open animosity. One such instance was ignited by Martínez's catalogue essay for the 1955 Galería Habana exhibition: "Until recently one could not properly speak of a true movement of painters and sculptors in our fine arts. A movement that would respond truly and forcibly to the needs of

an ample and spontaneous art, in contrast with the Cuban painting still called new and that is now many years old." This outright dismissal of the preceding modernist movement and the categorization of them as the old guard did not go well with the older artists. A major point of contention with *Los Once* was the term "Cuban painting" frequently used by the critic José Gómez Sicre to denominate the art of the 1940s. *Los Once* were striving for a more "universal" expression in art, in tune with international trends at mid-century, thus their skepticism to the notion of a narrowly define national art. The dissenting position of the group in regards to their predecessors' notion of "Cuban painting" is best expressed by Llinás' ironic observation: "I have never seen a tube of Cuban paint."¹⁰

Paradoxically, this group of abstract artists took a strong political stance against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, who came to power through a military coup in March of 1952. They were in the first ranks of the aforementioned *Homage to José Martí* exhibition, also known as the *Anti-Biennial*. This exhibition was meant to protest the II Hispanic-American Biennial of 1954, which they and many other artists boycotted because it was organized by a fascist government (Franco's), hosted by a dictatorship (Batista's), and to make matters worse, held as part of the festivities to commemorate the centenary of Martí's birth. The indignation on the part of Cuban artists and their allies motivated a number of counter exhibitions, beginning with *Homage to Martí* and culminating in the First University Festival. Later, after *Los Once* disbanded, the core of the group (Consuegra, Llinás, Martínez, Oliva, and Vidal) also refused to participate in the III Hispanic-American Biennial (1956), and boycotted the VIII National Salon of 1957. To protest the latter, held at the National Museum of Fine Arts, they participated in a counter exhibition held across the street from the museum's entrance.

As part of their opposition to Batista's regime and its cultural politics, the core artists of the group also renounced participation in state-sponsored scholarships and the 1% Art in Public Places program. Given the climate of political corruption and strong commercialism at the time, the leading members of the group believed that artists were better off earning a living through other means than their art, for the art market (to the extent that it existed in Cuba, either

public or private), exerted a compromising influence on artists. During that decade, Consuegra worked in an architectural firm, Llinás taught in a public school, Martínez worked in an advertisement firm, Oliva worked as assistant to the sculptor José Sicre and others in the making of public monuments, and Vidal worked as a commercial artist.

As suggested earlier, the motivation behind the group's formation was an act of mutual support to confront an inhospitable artistic environment. Initially they had no specific aesthetic credo, other than an open ended commitment to abstraction, which may account for their lack of a coming-out manifesto. In time, however, abstract expressionism became the dominant aesthetic creed of the movement. The United States pervasive influence in Cuban life of the 1950s and in particular its exportation of the New York School's abstract expressionism as part of the Cold War's cultural front, had its impact in Cuban art of that decade.¹¹ Moreover, the rise of New York as the new art capital of the Western world following World War II also turned the eyes of *Los Once* from Paris to New York. In fact, many of the artists of the group visited or studied in the United States during their formative years. For the first time, a Cuban avant-garde came forth inspired by an American movement as opposed to a European one. In this case, *Los Once* set a precedent for much of contemporary Cuban art. It should be added that also for the first time a Cuban vanguard movement was synchronized with the international avant-garde, setting the pace for contemporary Cuban art.

Their aesthetic creed can be approximated from critics' and artists' statements. Texidor wrote in the catalogue for La Rampa exhibition (1953) that their abstraction: "Looked out upon the world through a window which opens on liberty, confronting the old, the stale, the tired, the superficial, with integrity and valor." Echoing the rhetoric of non-objective art at mid-century, and particularly that of the New York School, Texidor associated their abstraction with the concepts of personal freedom, artistic integrity, and the assertion of the new in avant-garde fashion. More precisely, Marquina defined the artistic trust of *Los Once* 's abstraction as "A certain longing to arrive, through the ways of abstract art, at the concrete expression of "concreteness", entering through the door of abstraction into the magical world of

objectivity."¹² The work and ideology of *Los Once* seem to agree very much with Marquina's modernist (Clement Greenberg's inspired) view of the end of painting and sculpture as illusion. Instead, promoting the idea of truth to materials and the view that paintings and sculptures are autonomous aesthetic objects. In his customary succinct way, Llinás put it this way: "In the philosophy of *Los Once*, a painting does not represent anything. It is a direct expression. Something that must be felt through its color and form."¹³ This was a new idea in Cuban art, which until 1953 had always retained a measure of illusionism and fluctuated between the paradigms of narration and symbolism.

The pioneering effort of *Los Once* at forming an organized group, one which surpassed the loose and inclusive bonding of so-called generation affinities, was short lived. The lack of such a practice in Cuban art as well as political, economic, and aesthetic differences worked against it. On the artistic front, members of the group developed their art at different paces, some producing little, and not all favored abstract expressionism. Politically, as the opposition to Batista's regime increased at mid-decade and the 26 of July movement became the main oppositional force, some of *Los Once* took a strong political stance in the latter's favor and others did not. A major flashing point was the decision by the core of the group not to participate in state-sponsored exhibitions and to reject any state-funded scholarships and awards. Some did not go along with these measures, including Cárdenas, whose acceptance of a scholarship to study in Paris created a definite rift in the unity of the group. Soon thereafter, on June 6 1955, they published a note in the newspaper *Tiempo en Cuba*, announcing the disbandment of *Los Once* by mutual agreement. It was signed by Antigua, Avila, Cárdenas, Consuegra, Diaz, Llinás, Oliva, and Vidal. The note suggest that the change was to allow freedom in the pursue of individual action. Actually, the main figures of the group had solo exhibitions, traveled, and pursued to some extent their own paths while a part of *Los Once*. Conversely, five of them continued to exhibit together after the demise of *Los Once*. *Los Once* became, in the word of Llinás, *Los Cinco* (The Five). In both cases, these groups represent, notwithstanding the constant change in number of participants and their brief duration, a first in Cuban art and the precedent for future artistic integrations.

III

Los Cinco —Consuegra, Llinás, Martínez, Oliva, and Vidal—continued to meet and exhibit together until 1963. This was a more mature group which pursued abstract expressionism to a greater extent, took their abstract art into the international scene, and began to integrate their work with architecture. An early example is the 1957 project by Llinás, Oliva, and Martínez in collaboration with the architects Hugo de Acosta and Modesto Campos at La Roca restaurant. As a group they held five exhibitions, three of which set new parameters for their art.¹⁴ The December 1955 exhibition *Contemporary Cuban Group*, held at the Galería Sudamericana in New York, took the Cuban version of abstract expressionism to the metropolis, where it was well received by a number of American critics, including Dore Ashton, who was then art critic for the New York Times. The 1957 exhibition *Abstract Cuban Painting in Venezuela*, held at Galería Sardio in Caracas, introduced the Cuban abstract movement to one of the capitals of Latin American art. The exhibition was equally well received with affirmative reviews in the local press; one of Caracas' major newspapers, the *Nacional*, gave it a full page review, with photographs of each artist's work, and the title: *Five of the Best Cuban Abstract Artists*.¹⁵

Also worth noting is their last exhibition, entitled *Abstract Expressionism* and held at Galería Habana in 1963. This exhibition is significant in a number of ways. Most importantly, it was a large show of forty-seven art works with the most complete catalogue ever, which included an introductory essay by Desnoes, a list of works in the exhibition, a few reproductions, and a list of collective exhibitions in which the groups (*Los Once* and *Los Cinco*) had participated. Paradoxically, this only exhibition to refer in its title—*Abstract Expressionism*—to these artists by their aesthetic creed, included some who did not practiced that artistic language. The exhibition presented eight artists (even *Los Cinco* were not always numerically correct), at least two of whom, Eiriz and the photographer Mario Garcia Joya (Mayito), had other artistic preferences. Although the Revolution was supposedly not friendly towards abstraction, the art of the bourgeoisie, this exhibition was sponsored by one of the cultural agencies of the Revolutionary government, Consejo Nacional de Cultura.

Los Cinco sympathized with the 26 of July movement and welcomed the Revolution. Some took positions in the Fine Arts Department of the Ministry of Public Works, headed by Consuegra. From there they worked at the integration of art and architecture with limited success. *Los Cinco* also continued to exhibit until the 1963 *Abstract Expressionism* exhibition, however, abstraction did not thrive in Cuban art after them. In the course of the 1960s, Llinás, Consuegra, and Oliva became disenchanted with the Revolution and, with no space for dissent, followed the beaten path of Cubans into exile. This effectively ended a decade of collaboration between the five artists at the core of *Los Once* and *Los Cinco*. The fact that the artists of these groups have lived on different sides of the Cuban political divide may explain the lack of exhibitions and literature on them. In any case, a full retrospective of *Los Once*, whose paintings and sculptures of that time are practically invisible today, is long overdue.

October 1996

Juan Martínez, Ph.D.

Endnotes

1. I am most grateful to Hugo Consuegra for providing me with a wealth of primary sources, including pages of his unpublished memoirs, Guido Llinás for his letters and phone conversations, and Tomás Oliva for his conversations and tape interview (April 1995, courtesy of my former student Carmen M. Galigarcía). This essay is based on information gathered from these artists' testimony, the exhibition catalogues for *Los Once* (1953-55) and *Los Cinco* (1955-63), journalistic articles, Edmundo Desnoes. "1952-1962 en la pintura cubana." *Pintores cubanos* (La Habana: Ediciones R, 1962), and Norma Smirnic. "El Grupo Los Once." Escuela de Artes y Letras, Universidad de la Habana, Noviembre 1969 (Graduate Thesis).

2. For a discussion of the trend towards abstraction in Cuban

art of the early 1950s, with emphasis on the pivotal date of 1953, see Adelaida de Juan. "La plástica en Cuba en 1953." *Pintura cubana*. 1980. See also Mario Carreño. "El factor moral en la pintura abstracta." *Noticias de Arte* (May 1953) for an apology of abstract art, and Juan Marinello. *Conversación con nuestros pintores abstractos* (Santiago de Cuba: Universidad de Oriente, 1960) for a rejection of abstraction in art.

3. June 7, 1953

4. April 16, 1953.

5. Unsigned. "Once Pintores y Escultores." *Noticias de Arte*. (May, 1953):5-6, and 13.

6. Their exhibitions as *Los Once* were as follows: "Once Pintores y Escultores", La Rampa, Havana, 1953; "Los Once," Lyceum, Havana, 1953; "Los Once," Círculo de Bellas Artes, Havana, 1954; "Los Once," Orden Caballeros de la Luz, Camagüey, 1954; "Los Once," Galería Artes Plásticas, Santiago de Cuba, 1955; (Untitled) Galería Habana, Havana, 1955.

7. Consuegra's unpublished memoirs.

8. Ibid.

9. Llinás, letter to the author, May 18, 1996.

10. Llinás, phone conversation, August 28, 1996.

11. For a basic discussion of the relationship between the School of New York and the Cold War, see Max Koszloff. "American Painting During the Cold War" (1973); and David and Cecile Shapiro. "Abstract Expressionism: The Politics of Apolitical Painting" (1977).

12. Marquina. *Información* (December 19, 1954).

13. Consuegra's unpublished memoirs.

14. The five exhibitions they held together were: "Contemporary Cuban Group," Galería Sudamericana, New York, 1955; "Pintura Abstracta Cubana en Venezuela," Galería Sardo, Caracas, 1957; "Cuatro Pintores y un Escultor," Lyceum, Havana, 1959; "8 Pintores y Escultores," Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana, 1961; and "Expresionismo Abstracto," Galería Habana, Havana, 1963.

15. *Nacional*. *Página de Arte*. (July 20, 1957).

Black Painting: The Art of Counterpoint

In 1963, Guido Llinás arrived in Paris empty-handed. In his suitcase, he had only some sketches. In Cuba, he had left behind artwork which seemed unsurpassable. The pieces done in Cuba had been "anti-paintings," almost monochromatic and empty of form. These paintings made of hints of spots on torn bags, frayed at the edges and stretched over frames not always perfectly rectangular, seem to negate any meaning.

It's in Paris where a new aesthetic starts taking form. It was there that Llinás found time for introspection and the spirit to break dependencies, as if he had to live outside of Cuba to understand what being black meant. He used the Afro-Cuban cultural heritage as his raw material, in counterpoint to the informal French painting of the '50s and '60s. In Paris, he also developed his friendship with Wilfredo Lam, the painter who showed him the inherent possibilities of his position.

It was back in 1946 that Lam first made an impact on Llinás with his first one-person exhibition. Lam allowed a new generation of painters in the Cuba of the 1940s to observe painting independent of the realistic model which was prevalent in contemporary Cuba. Lam expanded the horizon for Llinás. Llinás' background was limited to the basic techniques in painting learned in one of the many academies of his province of Pinar del Rio. Exposure to Lam gave Llinás room for growth as a painter.

Guido Llinás' initial exposure to the arts began as a child with the piano, without much success. At ten, he attempted the clarinet, and at fifteen, he decided on painting. Of his earlier works, some landscapes survive, but what stand out from this period are his portraits, which accented facial features, more similar to Rouault than to Gauguin.

Llinás eventually moved to Havana where he found no major opportunities. He returned to Pinar del Rio where he became an avid reader of anything he could find about international contemporary painting. Very soon, Llinás perceived the limited scope of the national production in aesthetics. Stagnant institutions were the major cause of this narrowness. Secondary was a nonexistent artistic market—a lack of galleries, art collectors, places to exhibit. One of the main forces in Cuban painting of this period is that the artists

themselves saw this lack as a possibility to create independently of commercial objectives.

San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts continued to restrain innovative impulses. At the end of the '40s, the majority of the important artists of the time had never stepped inside the hallways of a performing arts building or had barely begun their studies. All of them focused on national themes, creating a native image of the island centered on the exaltation of certain cultural symbols (middle point, the Interiors of Cerro) which embodied the "Cuban sentiment," in summary, mystifying painting.

In 1953, *Los Once* (The Eleven) was founded in Havana, Cuba. Its purpose was to end the close-mindedness of the art world that blocked the advances of the School of Paris in the 1920s. They admired the abstraction of the postwar, a break with cubism and a type of painting inclined to eradicate national frontiers. Initially, *Los Once* centered on what the most favorable critics called aesthetics in keeping with the ideology of pure form. With time, however, the official position of the group began to evolve toward an expressive abstractionism.

It is important to point out that of the members of *Los Once* only Guido Llinás, Raúl Martínez and Tomás Oliva adhered to the abstract expressionism whose automatism is found in Lam's drawings. Neither Hugo Consuegra, who was too much of a constructivist with strong resonances of Arshile Gorky's aesthetics, nor Antonio Vidal, who, according to a critic of the period, pursued a "hallucinating equilibrium," correspond to this criteria. *Los Once* were reduced to only these five a few years after everything had begun.

At the beginning of the 1950s, while Raúl Martínez studied in Chicago, Llinás began his first trips to New York, Washington, and Philadelphia, where he discovered Newman, Rothko, and Pollock, and above all Motherwell, Kline, de Kooning, and Gottlieb.

In 1957, Llinás arrived in Europe by way of Italy and eventually lived in Paris until 1959, working for a few months in Wilfredo Arcay's serigraphy studio, from where he could observe European abstractionism.

Long after his return home, in 1963, Llinás abandoned his teaching post in the School of Architecture, along with several projects and murals.

His painting grew more solitary, but he never lost interest in collaborating with other artists, such as his work on the Vedado at La Roca Restaurant with Raúl Martínez, Tomás Oliva, and the architect Hugo d'Acosta. This avant-garde architectural work continues to be of great interest because the project integrated painting and sculpture, surpassing a merely decorative function and achieving a global conception instead. Another notable achievement of the Llinás' last years in Havana was the set and decoration for *Aire Frio*, (Cold Air), which premiered in 1963 and was the longest play of Virgilio Piñera.

Llinás returned to Europe. There the context, centered on individual creation, which did not permit this type of transverse circulation. Instead, Llinás dedicated his time and effort to wood engraving, a medium that he preferred to metal and the technique that he had studied at Stanley Hayter studio between 1960 and 1961. Since then, xylography (wood engraving) had become the most widely developed technique next to oil painting.

The Paris of the 1960s had ceased to be the cultural capital of the world. Under the dictates of American painting, the market passed from abstract expressionism to pop art, to happenings, and from there minimalist painting. Llinás got well acquainted with the evolution of kinetics when he took a position in Denise Rene's Gallery, whose principal artists were Vasarely and other pioneers of European abstractionism such as Arp.

In a constant progression through the 1980s, Denise Rene's Gallery, which also supported Venezuelan and Argentinian kinetic artists, offered a privileged point from which to observe contemporary art. An artist with less solid convictions might have let himself be influenced by the brilliant environment. Not so for Llinás.

Confronted with the French intellectual medium of that time, which favored the Castro regime, the Cuban diaspora lived in forced isolation, where diverse natures converged and Afro-Cuban heritage surfaced in the foreign environment. From this a new focus took place, which integrated all aesthetic aspects of "Black expressionism."

In order to perceive the novelty represented by the Guido Llinás' "Black painting", some aspects of Cuban painting, intimately related to the history of international art of the twentieth century should be indicated. Since the rediscovery of Peruvian craftsmanship by Gauguin and African sculpture by cubism, American primitivism followed. There existed, on the one hand, the

constructivism of the Uruguayan Torres-Garcia, utilizing primarily architectural elements and Peruvian pottery, and on the other hand, Rivera's mural works that state his knowledge of religious manuscripts and the pre-Hispanic sculpture toward a political statement with nationalistic and identity purposes.¹ It's the last trend which prevails in the Americas until the eruption of surrealism and abstract expressionism of the 40s. The Cuban variable of American primitive art wasn't precisely the re-evaluation of the mystifying pre-Hispanic heritage (The Siboney of Lecuona), but the rescue of African sentiment in Cuba, thanks to the anthropological research of Fernando Ortiz, followed by Lydia Cabrera. This process is delicate because it deals with contemporary culture, which doesn't allow the simplicity of the idealized archaeology of Rivera.

At the beginning of the 1940s, the "black theme" was gaining great importance after the success of the "Black Tales" (short stories) of Lydia Cabrera in Paris and the presence of Wilfredo Lam in La Habana. Lam worked with his wife Helen Holzer and with Lydia Cabrera, who was equally interested in the Afro-Cuban ethnography, and studied Haitian voodoo under the direction of Pierre Mabille. If we compare Lam's works with the paintings of the same period by Victor Manuel, Portacarrero or Mario Carreño as they relate to Afro-Cuban cultural motifs, the contrast is evident between "from within" which Lam projects, and the closeness derived from customs practiced by his colleagues.²

Iconographic study reveals Lam's knowledge of the African rituals practiced in Cuba.³ His contribution to Cuban painting is not limited to this. In his works, one can find a mutual fertilization between Afro-Cuban mythology and a formal search beyond the national frontier and beyond the strict frame of late surrealism, (the automatism of his drawings). They take us to the light of the subconscious or to the pre-logic primitive thought of the '30s surrealists, when they discovered the so-called tribal cultures, but also, together with Oceanic sculpture, they integrate African aesthetics set aside by the surrealists and make use of it in the form of symbols⁴, a growing trend in the '50s and '60s and important in order to understand the evolution of Llinás' painting.

Lam's composition is a purification of each element of all the characters that make up those represented by a monochromatic background, no longer in perspective, in contrast with his paintings of the '40s. Always a frontal space, no longer the famous "window" which displays around the "activating nucleus" which radiates to all the

sides of the canvas. From 1945-47, Lam introduces the transverse axis and the diagonal and in many paintings, characters are upside down, which negates the vertical style representation which governs western pictorial representation.⁵

The details of the "Black paintings" of Guido Llinás start from a common background free of symbols and, with respect to the composition, orientation of the canvas in multiple directions. The main difference between Lam and Llinás was that Lam continued to be figurative, attached to the aesthetics manifestation of the Afro-Cuban mythology, while Llinás adopted a more basic vocabulary from which he developed a vast number of formal and rhythmic variations. He also added a greater complexity in the texture of the backgrounds, which is inherent in abstract expressionism.

One of the first works made in Paris, *Painting*, 1964, shows many symbols only slightly visible behind a white layer, and painted black or cut. A game is established between the print and inscription, between half-covered and half-emerging forms, between different layers of paint, varying between the diluted and the thick. The symbols are placed in random form—small and discrete—crosses, double crosses and arrows are dispersed, perhaps triggering nostalgia for Cuba.

Peinture Rouge, 1966, exhibited in this retrospective, offers an important number of symbols on a greater scale. As indicated previously, the relatively modest formats of the works motivate the painter to insist on the edges, indicating the fragmented character of the canvas, even if they don't allow for the epic wideness of a Pollack or Newman. *Peinture Rouge*, 1966, accentuates this tendency because the symbols insinuate a double movement inside (the arrow at the superior section) and downward outside the pictorial space. The rhythm starts to organize itself with certain vigor; the arrow in the horizontal position constitutes the extra-rhythmic accent, the counterpoint of the vertical structure (arrows with double heads). The symbols continue to be the same, but, for the first time, a small circle appears. It appears to be the beginning of random juxtaposition but actually avoids the hierarchy of space causing each of the symbols to emanate from its surroundings.

With the emergence of the symbols, the painter again is faced with the opposition that's present between depth and the first plane, as opposed to automatism, which appeared a long time before. There are multiple options. In *Pintura Negra*, 1972, one can observe how much

variety had developed in the inscription of symbols: thick layers by the contours of the principals standing out above a monochromatic background, a second series of symbols placed near the edges, floating like obscure islands. A third variant is the "graffiti" written in pencil. Instead of a serial disposition, here the canvas is constructed in a "grosso modo" around the central ellipsis even if it is slightly displaced. However, another black painting advanced in a direction which is far more interesting. *Pintura Negra*, 1974 is one of the first compositions which achieves unity between symbol and background through the proximity of the symbols. The strong black applied at the end of the process fluctuates between its function of surface and symbol. Llinás has achieved the fusion of the different layers of a flat surface.

At the same time, his symbolism has evolved: the Abakuá cross placed diagonally inside the circle no longer has the ovals of Efor and Efik. (The Abakuá Society is a fraternity of Afro-Cuban males). The arrow, still present, will be reduced to only the tip and be converted into a triangle. The cross inside the circle will be brought together later at the central point. With time, the painter acquires more freedom with the basic symbol of the Abakuá. An observation of Lam's work is valid for Llinás': it is not about verifying if a certain element is found in the "dictionary" of symbols; its purely aesthetic use doesn't permit a standard code. Starting with a basic vocabulary, Llinás is enriching his language by introducing the polygony derived from the circle and the triangle.⁶

The difference between line and background later is erased, because the same color can at the same time create a flat surface and symbol as in the case of *Untitled*, 1989, where the red and the blue appear at the right side as smudges in the background, while at the left side they are concrete shapes. At the bottom left side, the designs, because of their thickness, fluctuate between both forms. The blue and the black come back together to a point so that both can be interpreted as symbols "in statu nascendi."

In the 1980s, Llinás tries to avoid any evidence of the brushstroke so a "chromatic sculpture" can be accomplished. This consists primarily in removing several layers of paint so it will deepen or highlight the painting's surface.⁷ The sculptural element also in Lam's art has similarities to Max Ernst of the 1950s when he places a figure in front of an absolutely flat surface. If in Lam the drawing prevails, Llinás confronts the canvas as

raw material waiting for the hand which will reveal the virtual forces which encompass it. In this sense the instrumental characters of African sculpture art can be attributed to Jean Laude.⁸ In this phase, which lasted until the beginning of the '90s, Llinás collected his collages of the '50s and very often included newspapers and other clippings that result in barely visible symbols to create the effect of texture. This gesture becomes visible in these works, but the artist burst into the movement by breaking the first layer of newspaper in a manner that revealed another one underneath inverting the order between the depth of background and the surface or first plane. Llinás was able to accomplish this because the medium size of his canvas always permitted him to control not only all the effects and materials, but also the composition.

Thirty-three years ago Guido Llinás was in exile. This retrospective celebrated in Florida is a perfect occasion to feel and understand the Cuban sentiment which is reflected in his art. His example shows that to define a national identity it is not sufficient to build on the heritage of the past, which is usually mystified. History is not made by historians or critics. Before the foreign phenomenon of *Los Once*, the leaders of tradition rejected them. These leaders did not believe the so-called tradition invoked by *Los Once* apt for capturing the present. They simply did not see what was so inherently Cuban in Llinás' paintings, even if rebellion was the sole reason behind his motivation. It is true, however, that he later pushed on with greater force and total freedom starting with the Parisian years.

Little has been said about the vibrancy of Llinás' work, maybe because it is more intimately related with the island, beyond all the possible references to the Afro-Cuban culture sketched here. Inside the pentatonic scale mentioned, after black and white, the artist always had preference for blue or for a metallic blue with gray and white tones. Too late he discovered, with satisfaction, that in Nigeria, the color of Changó, high God of Santería, is blue, not red as in Cuba.⁹ Here is a coincidence, not a risky one, between his individual expressiveness and an authentic black aesthetic in a place where African art has barely been explored through painting. However, Llinás was never initiated into any religious system. Perhaps these blues reflect, before anything, the dramatic Cuban sky, with its whitish

blues and grouped clouds in a constant architectural metamorphosis, which offers a second horizon above the sea.

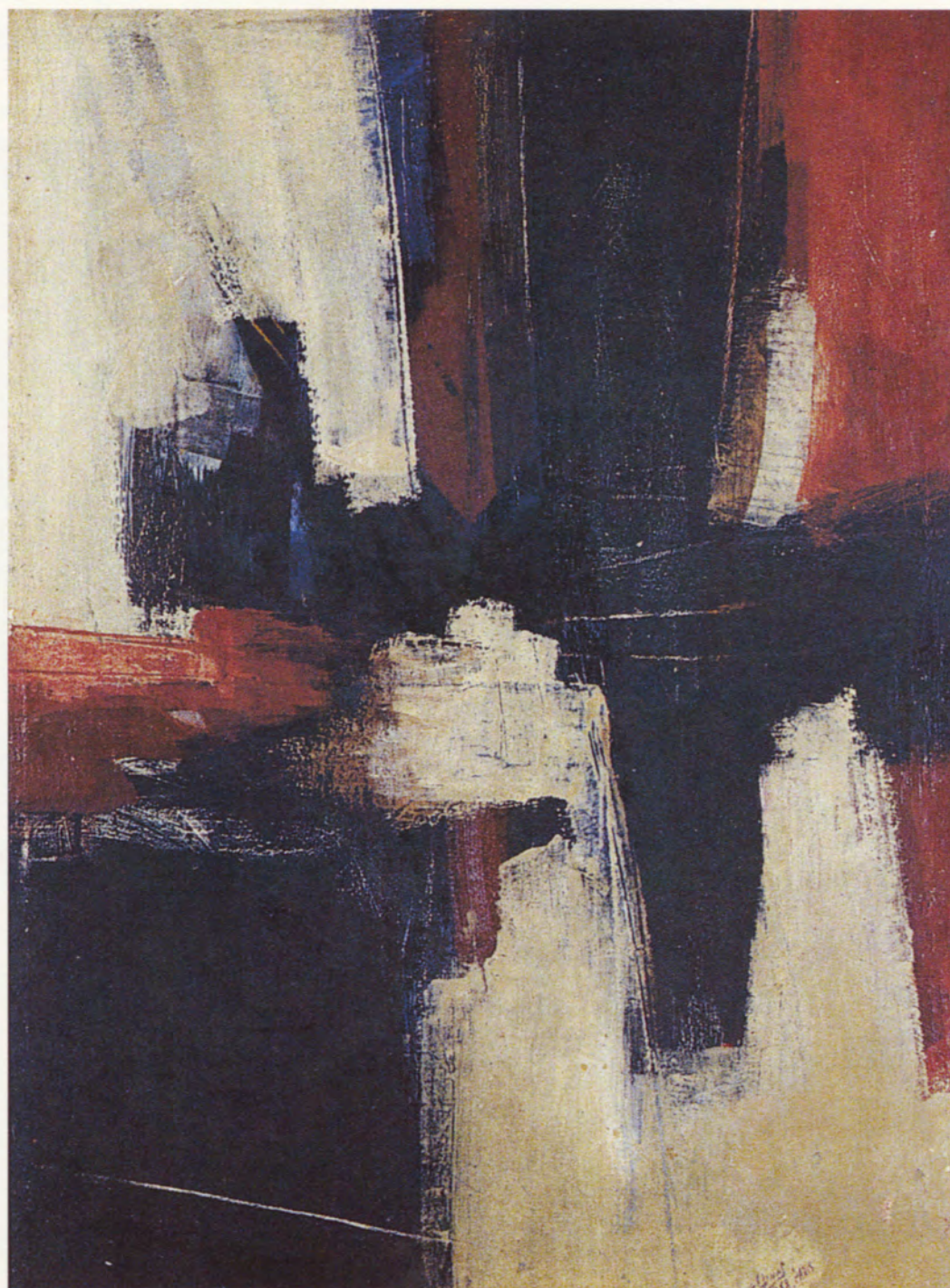
March 1996
Christoph Singler
University of Franche-Comte, France

Endnotes

1. See Barbara Braun: Prehispanic art and Post-columbian World. New York, ed. Abrams 1993.
2. See Gerardo Mosquera: "Modernidad y africanía: Wilfredo Lam en su isla" in: Wilfredo Lam, Joan Miro Foundation, Barcelona 1993.
3. Refer to Julia Herzberg's works, in particular, the article "Wilfredo Lam; The Development of a Style and World View, The Havana Years 1941-1952", in the catalog of Harlem exposition, op.cit.
4. The surrealist misconception of Lam consisted in viewing him as a portrait artist of deities and mythological characters. Regarding the rest, within surrealist painting the automatism is more of the exception which confirms the rule.
5. In 1944, during his illuministic phase, the first transversal compositions appeared; in '45, the first drawings with inverted figures, with a return to drawing in '47, the tendency is reinforced (The Ascension, 1947); Le Reve, 1947; L'Spirit aveugle, 1948) in oil painting.
6. See Lydia Cabrera, op. cit; pp 225 ss.
7. A majority of the wood engravings show this tendency, because the resonances of the African sculpture are more evident there; they are part of a synthesis with graphic symbols. To clarify, Llinás worked his wood engravings with an African ax which he found at a Parisian market. Also observe the relationship between his work and the African textiles, above all what relates to rhythm (see Ferris Thompson: The Flash of the Spirit, African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy. New York, Random House 1983, c.4).
8. Jean Laude: Les arts de l'Afrique Noire (The arts of Black Africa). Paris, ed. Librairie Generale Française, 1966, where it is emphasized that "the material doesn't impose a style... it is the medium which permits the artist to express idea". p.273.
9. Conversation with the author in 1995.



Guido Llinás, *Untitled*, 1957. Oil on canvas, 30 x 39 1/2". Collection of Dr. Harry M. Sánchez and Gloria M. Suarez, Coral Gables, FL



Guido Llinás, *Untitled*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 28 1/2 x 21". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



Guido Llinás, *Untitled*, 1958. Oil and paper on canvas, 25 1/2 x 21". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



Guido Llinás, *Signes*, 1964. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 28 3/4". Private Collection, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Peinture Rouge*, 1966. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 28 3/4". Private Collection, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Signes*, 1966-67. Oil on canvas, 39 x 31 1/2". Private Collection, Miami, FL



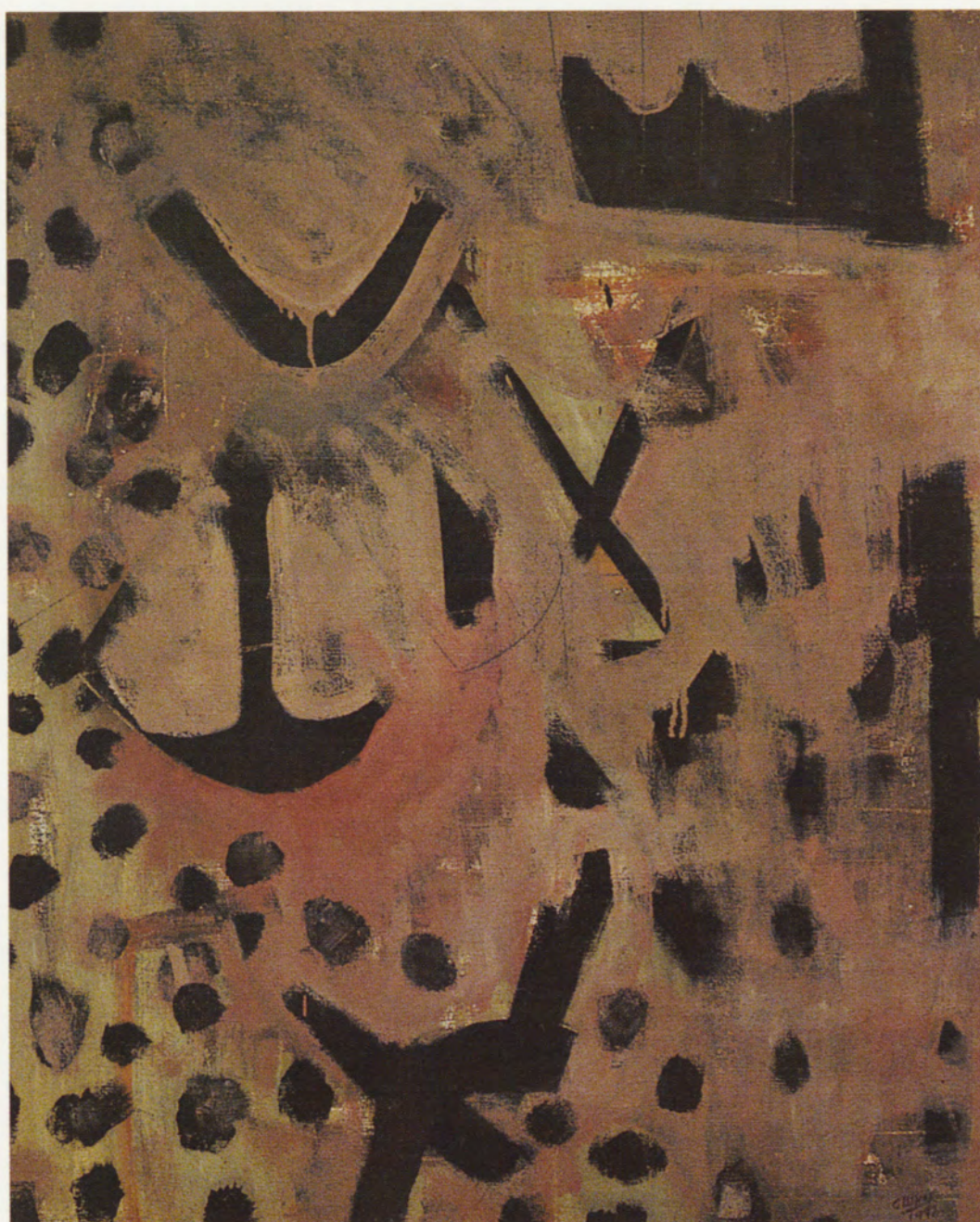
Guido Llinás, *Signes*, 1968. Oil on burlap, 57 3/4 x 44 3/4". Collection of Mrs. Marta Gutierrez, Key Biscayne, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1966-69. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 28 3/4". Private Collection, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1970. Oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 32". Collection of Mrs. Marta Gutierrez, Key Biscayne, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1972. Oil on canvas, 39 x 31 1/2". Collection of the artist



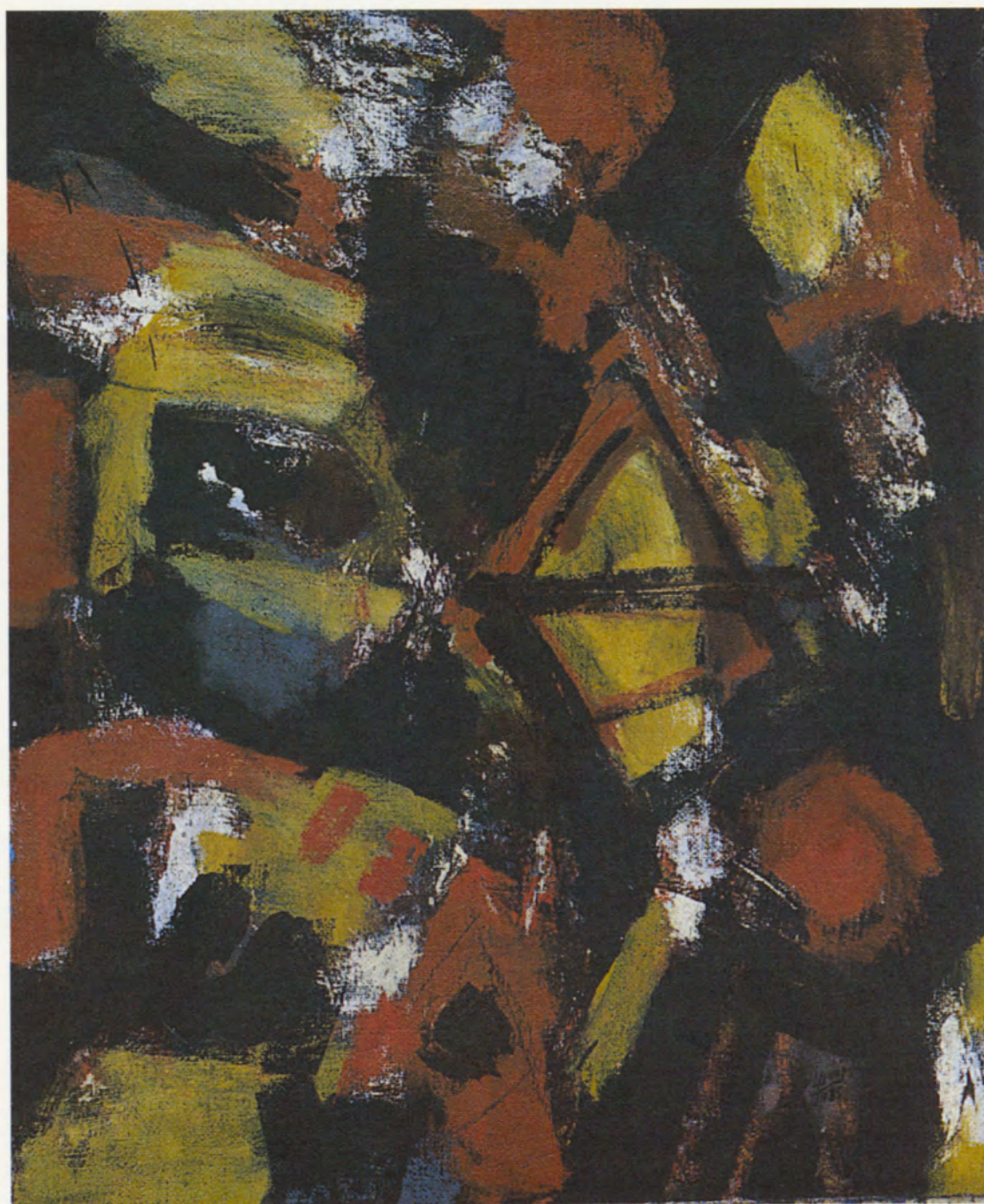
Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1972. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 28 3/4". Collection of the artist



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1974. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 28 3/4". Collection of the artist



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1978. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30". Collection of the artist



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1981-85. Oil on canvas, 39 x 31 1/2". Collection of Lorenzo Garcia-Vega, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Untitled*, 1989. Acrylic on paper, 51 x 38". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



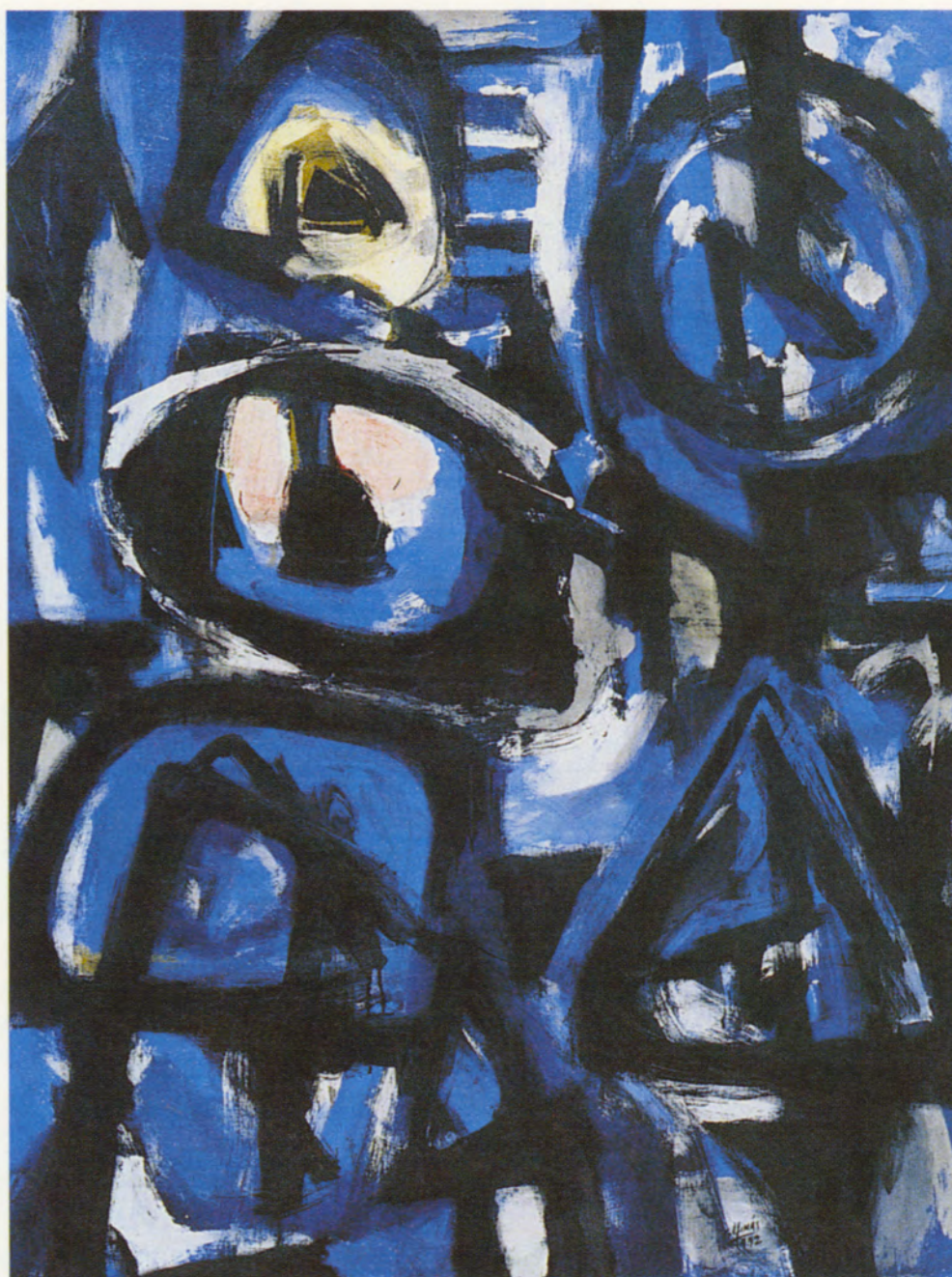
Guido Llinás, *Untitled*, 1990. Oil on canvas, 40 x 30". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1991. Oil on canvas, 39 x 31 1/2". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejjidor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1992. Oil on canvas, 28 3/4 x 36 1/4". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejjidor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Por François Sauvage*, 1992. Oil on canvas, 51 x 38". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1992. Acrylic on paper, 51 x 34". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1992. Oil on canvas, 57 x 45". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Por R. Motherwell*, 1992. Oil on canvas, 47 x 47". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Pintura Negra*, 1993. Oil on canvas, 36 x 28". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor, Miami, FL



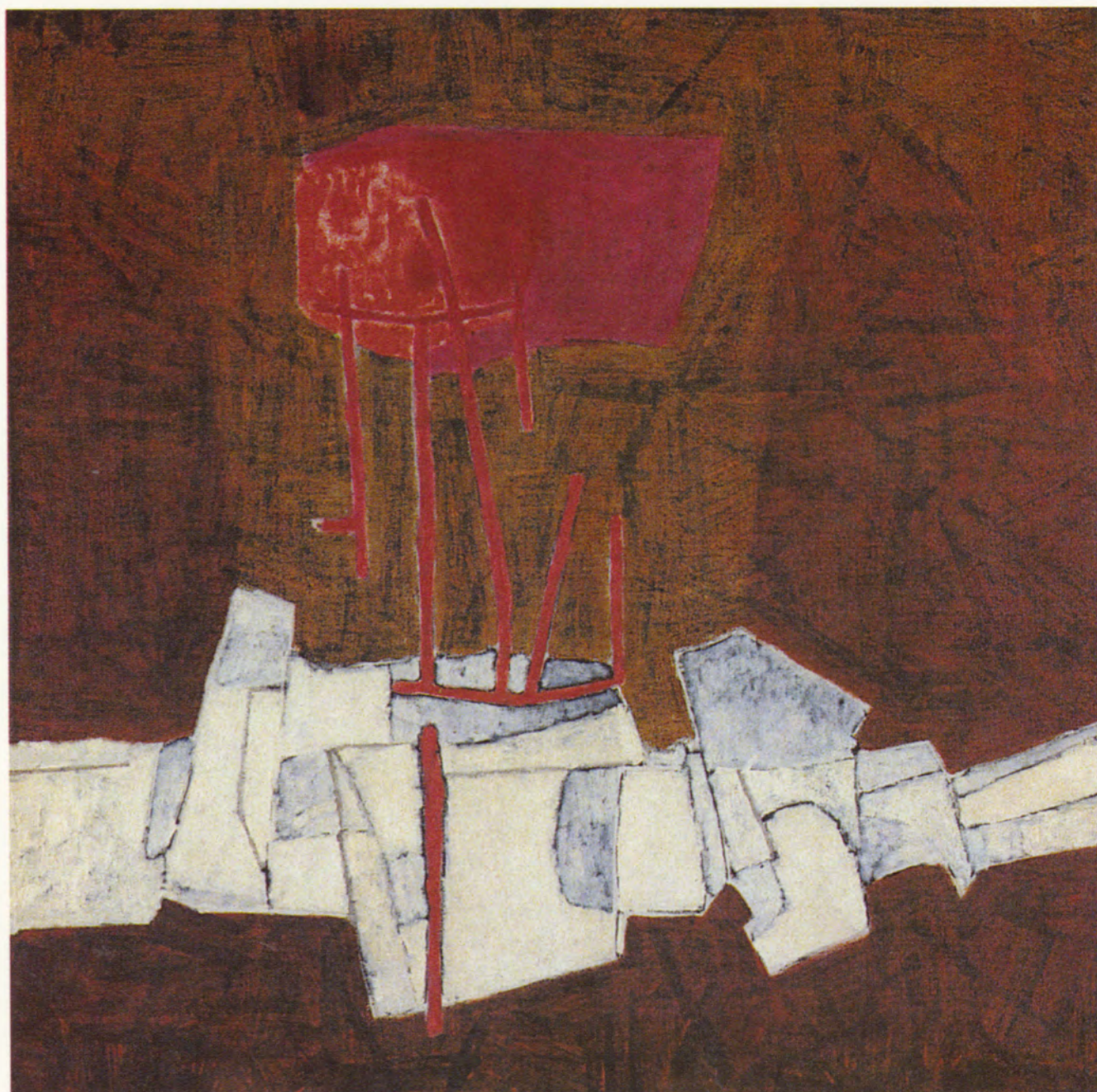
Guido Llinás, *Por François Sauvage*, 1994. Oil on canvas, 40 x 30". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Por François Sauvage*, 1994. Oil on canvas, 39 x 31 1/2". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Guido Llinás, *Por François Sauvage*, 1994. Oil on canvas, 48 x 38". Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejdor, Miami, FL



Hugo Consuegra, *Entrada en La Tierra*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 40 1/2 x 39 1/2". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



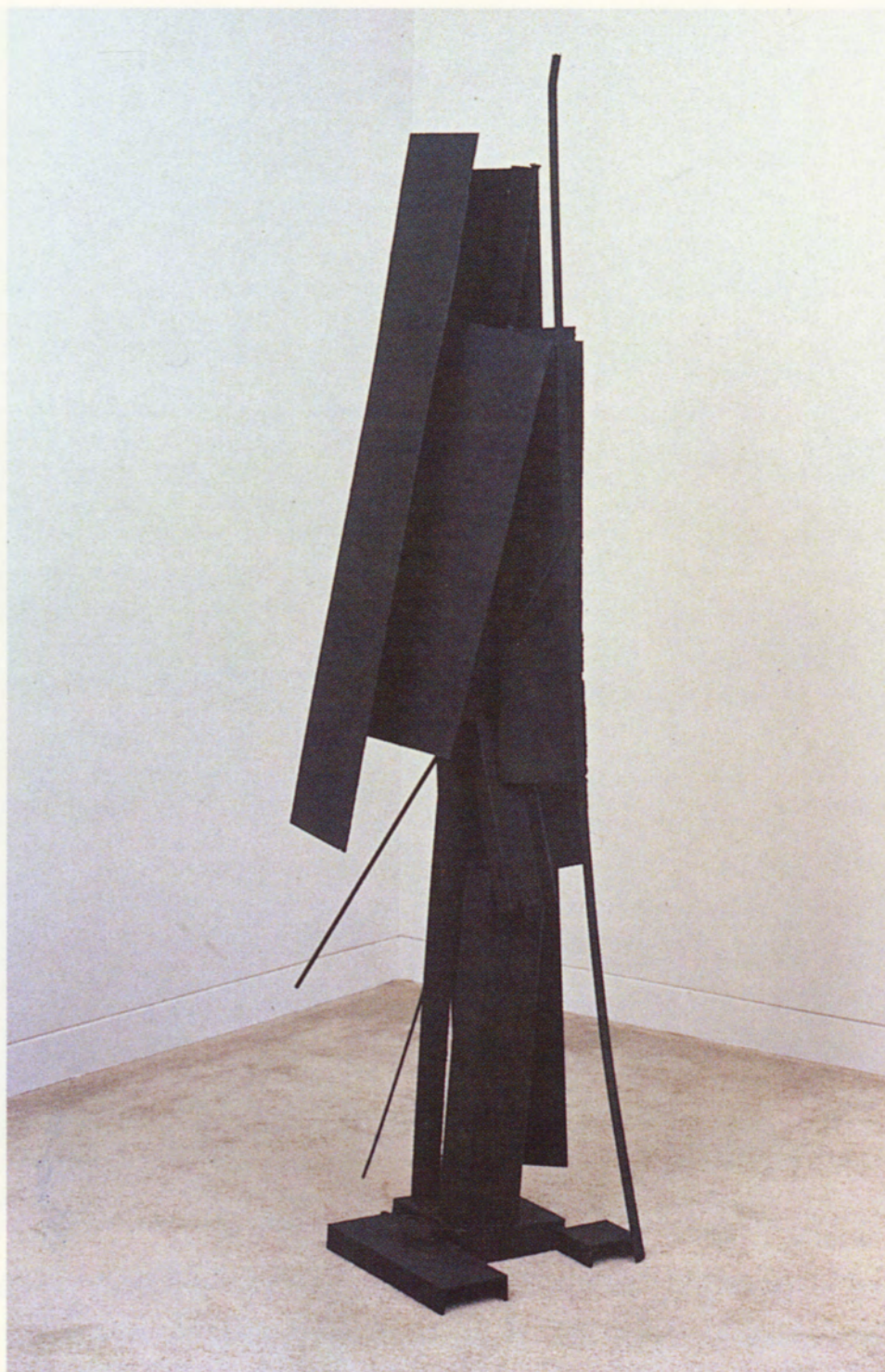
Hugo Consuegra, *Smuggler's Night*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 40 x 50". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



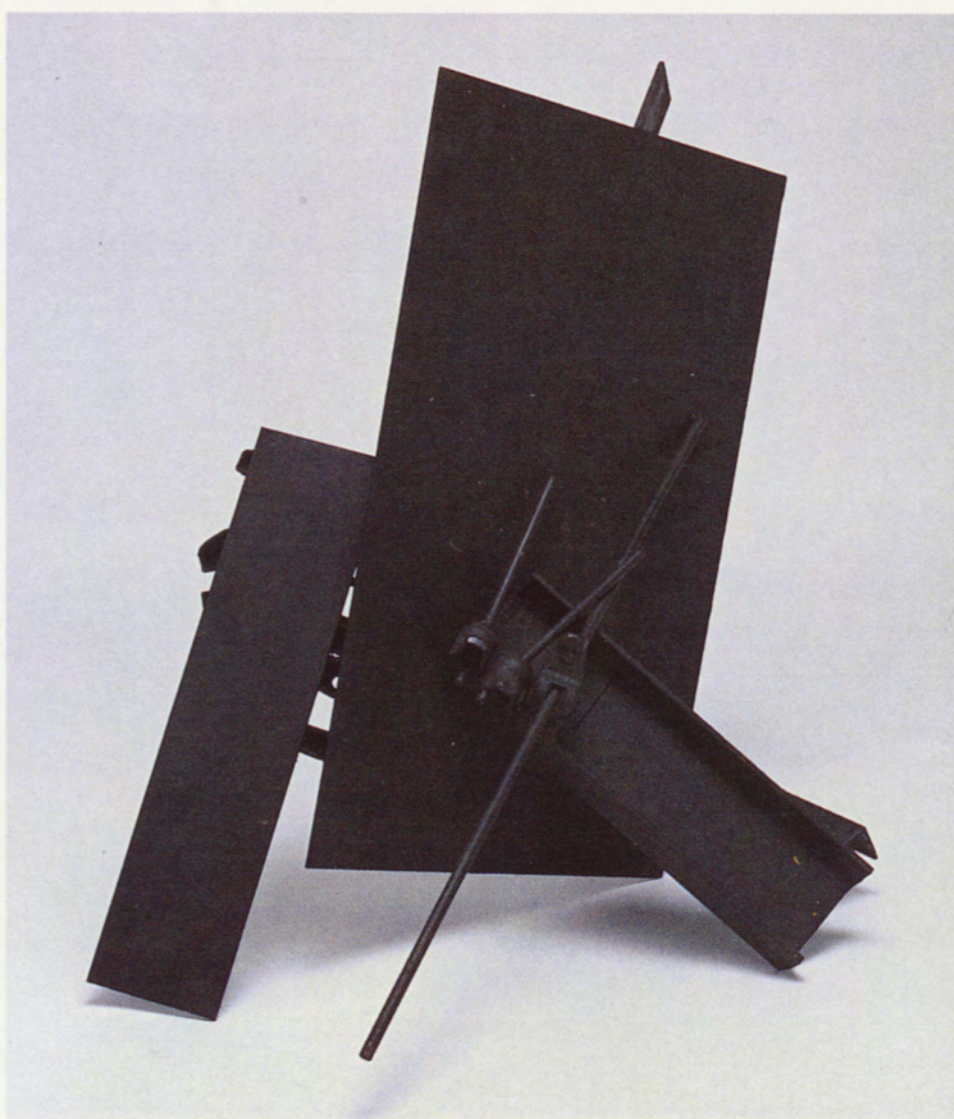
Raúl Martínez, *Fragment I*, 1957. Oil on canvas, 23 1/2 x 34 1/2". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



Raúl Martínez, *Untitled*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 23 1/2 x 28 3/4". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



Tomás Oliva, *Untitled*, n.d. Painted steel, 81 x 24 x 14". Collection of the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL



Tomás Oliva, *Untitled*, n.d. Painted steel, 27 x 26 x 24". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate



Antonio Vidal, *Pintura*, 1958. Oil on canvas, 24 x 19 3/4". Collection of the Cuban Museum of the Americas, Miami, FL. Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Exhibition Checklist

(italic page numbers denote locations of reproductions)

Hugo Consuegra

Entrada en La Tierra, 1958 (page 28)

Oil on canvas

40 1/2 x 39 1/2"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL

Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Hugo Consuegra

Smuggler's Night, 1958 (page 28)

Oil on canvas

40 x 50"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL

Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Guido Llinás

Untitled, 1957 (page 15)

Oil on canvas

30 x 39 1/2"

Collection of Dr. Harry M. Sánchez and
Gloria M. Suarez, Coral Gables, FL

Guido Llinás

Untitled, 1958 (page 15)

Oil on canvas

28 1/2 x 21"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL

Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Guido Llinás

Untitled, 1958 (page 16)

Oil and paper on canvas

25 1/2 x 21"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL

Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Guido Llinás

Signes, 1964 (page 16)

Oil on canvas

36 1/4 x 28 3/4"

Private Collection, Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Peinture Rouge, 1966 (page 17)

Oil on canvas

36 1/4 x 28 3/4"

Private Collection, Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Signes, 1966-67 (page 17)

Oil on canvas

39 x 31 1/2"

Private Collection, Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Signes, 1968 (page 18)

Oil on burlap

57 3/4 x 44 3/4"

Collection of Mrs. Marta Gutierrez,
Key Biscayne, FL

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1966-69 (page 18)

Oil on canvas

36 1/4 x 28 3/4"

Private Collection, Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1970 (page 19)

Oil on canvas

39 3/8 x 32"

Collection of Mrs. Marta Gutierrez,
Key Biscayne, FL

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1972 (page 19)

Oil on canvas

39 x 31 1/2"

Collection of the artist

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1972 (page 20)

Oil on canvas

36 1/4 x 28 3/4"

Collection of the artist

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1974 (page 20)

Oil on canvas

36 1/4 x 28 3/4"

Collection of the artist

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1978 (page 21)

Oil on canvas

24 x 30"

Collection of the artist

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1981-85 (page 21)

Oil on canvas

39 x 31 1/2"

Collection of Lorenzo Garcia-Vega,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Untitled, 1989 (page 22)

Acrylic on paper

51 x 38"

Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejjidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Untitled, 1990 (page 22)

Oil on canvas

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Guido Llinás

Por François Sauvage, 1992 (page 24)

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Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Por R. Motherwell, 1992 (page 25)

Oil on canvas

47 x 47"

Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1993 (page 26)

Oil on canvas

36 x 28"

Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Pintura Negra, 1993 (cover)

Oil on canvas

30 X 28"

Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Por François Sauvage, 1994 (page 26)

Oil on canvas

40 x 30"

Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Por François Sauvage, 1994 (page 27)

Oil on canvas

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Collection of Mrs. Francisco Tejidor,
Miami, FL

Guido Llinás

Por François Sauvage, 1994 (page 27)

Oil on canvas

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Miami, FL

Raúl Martínez

Fragment I, 1957 (page 29)

Oil on canvas

23 1/2 x 34 1/2"

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of the Americas, Miami, FL
Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

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Untitled, 1958 (page 29)

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Painted steel

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Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Antonio Vidal

Sagua de Tánamo, 1958 (page 1)

Oil on canvas

28 x 35 1/4"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL
Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Antonio Vidal

Pintura, 1958 (page 31)

Oil on canvas

24 x 19 3/4"

Collection of the Cuban Museum
of the Americas, Miami, FL
Gift of Rafael Casalins Estate

Artists' Biographies

HUGO CONSUEGRA

(1929 -)

Birthplace: Havana, Cuba

Education: 1955 Graduate in Architecture, Havana University, Havana, Cuba
1948 B.S., Havana Institute, Havana, Cuba
1943-44 San Alejandro Academy of Arts, Havana, Cuba
1941-47 Hubert de Blanc Music Conservatory, Havana, Cuba

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

1993 Ysrael Seinuk, New York, NY
1981 Cayman Gallery, New York, NY
1978 Forma Gallery, Coral Gables, FL
1976 Aames Gallery, New York, NY
1971 Cisneros Gallery, New York, NY
1969 Cisneros Gallery, New York, NY
1964 International Festival of Sopot, Poland
Galería Habana, Havana, Cuba
1958 Museum of Fine Arts, Caracas, Venezuela
1957 Roland de Aenlle Gallery, New York, NY
1956 Pan American Union, Washington, DC
1955 Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba
1953 Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba

GUIDO LLINÁS

(1923 -)

Birthplace: Pinar del Rio, Cuba

Education: 1953 Graduate in Pedagogy, Havana University, Havana, Cuba

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

1994 Arver Space, Paris, France
1993 Jadite Galleries, New York, NY
Espace Croix-Baragnon, Toulouse, France
1992 Marta Gutiérrez Fine Arts, Miami, FL
1991 Ruta Correa Gallery, Freiburg, Germany
El Patio Gallery, Bremen, Germany
1989 Museo de Arte, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Museo Cubano, Miami, FL
1983 Galerie Biren, Paris, France
1981 Galerie Biren, Paris, France
Coral Gables Library, Miami, FL
1979 Galerie l'Atelier aux Abbesses, Paris, France
1978 Forma Gallery, Miami, FL
Centre d'Art Vaduuz Liechtenstein, Paris, France
1976 Galerie Biren, Paris, France
1973 Galerie Biren, Paris, France
1968 Galerie Vanadis, Switzerland
1966 Galerie Weiller, Paris, France
1962 Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba

1957 Galería Habana, Havana, Cuba
Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba
1955 Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba
1953 Galería Matanzas, Matanzas, Cuba

Selected Group Exhibitions

1993 *Four Painters of Latin America*, Garges-lès Gonesse, France
1992 Espace Chevreuil, *Actual Expressions: 62 Latin American Artists*, Nanterre, France
Drederikstad, International Biennial of Graphic Works, Norway
National Library, *Masterpieces of XX Century Graphics*, Paris, France
Mairie du Vélème, *Typography and the Art Book*, Paris, France
Domaine de Wégimont, *Wood Cuts & Lithographs*, Liège, Belgium
1991 Galería Ruta Correa, Frankfurt Art Fair, Germany
1990 Marta Gutiérrez Fine Arts, Chicago Art Fair, Chicago, Illinois
Triennial of Graphic Works, Frechen, Germany
1987 Museum of Modern Art, III International of Graphic Works, Liège, Belgium
1986 Grand Palais, Salon de Mai, Paris, France
1984 Gruenien Museum, International Triennial of Graphic Works, France
1981 Espace Cardin, Salon de Mai, Paris, France
1978 Grand Palais, Salon de Mai, Paris, France
1976 Grand Palais, Salon Comparaison, Paris, France
1974 II Biennial of Graphic Works, Frederikstad, Norway
1969 Sala Gaudí, *Arte Latinoamericano*, Barcelona, Spain
Museum of Modern Art, *Le Livre comme Oeuvre d'Art*, Editions Brunidor, Paris, France
1966 Italian-American Institute, *Latin American Graphic Works*, Rome, Italy
1965 Museum of Modern Art, *Latin American Artists in Paris*, Paris, France
1963 Galería La Habana, *Expresionismo Abstracto*, Havana, Cuba
1962 Palacio de Bellas Artes, Salón Nacional, Havana, Cuba
1961 VI Biennial of Sao Paolo, Brazil
1960 Pabellón de Cuba, II Biennial of Mexico
Palacio de Bellas Artes, *Pintura Contemporánea de Cuba*, Caracas, Venezuela
Palacio de Bellas Artes, Salón Nacional, Havana, Cuba
1957 Galería Sardo, *Pintura Cubana Abstracta*, Caracas, Venezuela
1955 Galería del Lyceum, *Los Once*, Camagüey, Cuba
Galería de Artes Plásticas, *Los Once*, Santiago de Cuba

- 1955 Galería Sudamericana, *Contemporary Cuban Group*, New York, New York
 1954 Círculo de Bellas Artes, *Los Once*, Havana, Cuba
 1953 Galería del Lyceum, *Los Once: Pinturas y Esculturas*, Havana, Cuba
 Galería Nuestro Tiempo, *Dibujos: 15 Artistas Jóvenes*, Havana, Cuba
 Galería La Rampa, *Grupo Los Once*, Havana, Cuba

RAÚL MARTÍNEZ

(1927 -)

Birthplace: Ciego de Ávila, Camagüey, Cuba

Education: Academia de San Alejandro
 1952 Design Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Selected Exhibitions

- 1987 Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1985 Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1978 Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1964 Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1963 *Expresionismo Abstracto 1963*, Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1961 *8 Pintores y Escultores*, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
 1955 Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba
 1954 Instituto Nacional de Cultura Batistiano, Havana, Cuba

ANTONIO VIDAL

(1928 -)

Birthplace: Havana, Cuba

Education: La Academia Villate

Selected Exhibitions

- 1963 *Expresionismo Abstracto 1963*, Galería de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1961 *8 Pintores y Escultores*, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
 1959 *Cuatro Pintores y Un Escultor*, Lyceum de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 1957 *Pintura Abstracta Cubana en Venezuela*, Galería Sardio, Venezuela
 1955 *Los Once*, Galería de Artes Plásticas de Santiago de Cuba
 Galería Habana, Havana, Cuba
Exposición de Pintores y Escultores Cubanos, Lyceum de Camagüey, Cuba
Contemporary Cuban Group, Galería de Sudamerica, New York, NY
 1954 *Los Once*, Orden Calalleros de la Luz, Camagüey, Cuba
 1953 *Quince Pintores y Escultores Jóvenes*, Galería Nuestro Tiempo, Havana, Cuba
 Galería de Mantanzas, Matanzas, Cuba
Once Pintores y Escultores, La Rampa, Havana, Cuba
Los Once, Galería del Lyceum, Havana, Cuba
Los Once, Círculo de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba

TOMÁS OLIVA

(1931 - 1996)

Birthplace: Havana, Cuba

Education: 1954 École du Mosaique de Rarem et Ceramique de Faience, Paris, France
 1952 Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas de San Alejandro, Havana, Cuba

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1989 North Miami Center of Contemporary Art, North Miami, Florida
 1989 Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, Miami, Florida
 1988 Federation of Cuban Teachers of Fine Arts, Miami, Florida
 1988 Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, Miami, Florida
 1988 Cultural Center Paul Dumail, Tonneins, France
 1988 OK South Gallery, South Miami, Florida
 1988 Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture, Miami, Florida
 1987 Galería Dos, Miami, Florida
 1987 Metropolitan Museum and Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida
 1987 Cuban Museum of Art and Culture, Miami, Florida
 1987 Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, Florida
 1986 VIII Autumn Salon, Miami, Florida
 1983 Annual Salon, Miami, Florida
 1983 Lanvin Gallery
 1982 Ana Sklar, Bay Harbor Islands, Florida

