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Latin Artist Panel Discussion

Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University

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Maria Martínez-Canas | Born Havana, Cuba 1960

Born in Cuba, raised in Puerto Rico, and now living in Miami, Martinez-Canas assembles the pieces of her multifaceted identity into a totem by using a complex photographic process. She draws cubist patterns and abstracted natural forms on large-scale negatives, incorporates images drawn from Cuban colonial maps and pre-Columbian art, and prints them in black-and-white. These hybrid forms announce her multiple cultural connections and recall the paintings of Cuban artist Wifredo Lam.

Marfa Brito | Born Havana, Cuba 1947

While preparing this installation, Brito remembered the well-known children's song called "El patio de mi casa (The Backyard of My House)." In Brito's backyard, nature struggles to survive the uprooting of migration, here symbolized by the constricting cradle, barren tree shadows, and cracked ground. Rain collects at the top of the wall and channels down into the sink, giving a tree sapling a chance to thrive. Brito's humble Cuban American kitchen is a site of remembrance, transformation, and growth.

Arturo Rodriguez | Born Ranchuelo, Cuba 1956

Rodriguez's unsettled picture was inspired by Italian artist Giorgione's The Tempest (about 1505), a puzzling painting that portrays a nude woman nursing a child under the watchful eye of a man, possibly a soldier. Like The Tempest, Rodriguez's painting gathers disparate elements and offers no clear narrative. Three figures stand, sit, or walk through an environment that lacks a stable ground, the emotional intensity evoking the uprootedness of exile or the upheaval of troubled times.

Maria Martinez-Canas: Totem Negro XVII, 1992, Gelatin silver print

Smithsonian American Art Museum
Museum purchase through the Smithsonian Institution Collections Acquisition Program, 1997.68

Marfa Brito: El patio de mi casa, 1990, Mixed media

Smithsonian American Art Museum
Museum purchase through the Smithsonian Institution Collections Acquisition Program, 1997.71a-g

Arturo Rodriguez: Sin Titulo, from the series La Tempestad, 1998, Oil on canvas

Smithsonian American Art Museum
Gift of Liza and Pedro J. Martinez-Fraga, 2013.18

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum

Join us for a panel discussion among these three prominent Miami-based artists included in the Frost Art Museum's current exhibition, Our America: The Latino Presence in American Art. The panel, to be moderated by Frost Art Museum Director Dr. Carol Damian, will provide each artist an opportunity to share how their careers developed and what inspires their artwork, and to give their perspectives on the state of Latino art in America today.

The panel discussion is open to the public and free of charge.

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