



RE/FORMULATIONS: NARRATIVE PROCESSES

William V. Musto Museum and Cultural Center
420 - 15th Street • Union City NJ 07087

Steven Bollman, Arturo Cuenca, Michael Casselli, Willy Castellanos, Frank Guillen,
Armando Guillen, Juan-Si González, Glenna Jennings, Rómulo Sans, Cepp Selgas.

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“The true path is along a rope, not a rope suspended way up in the air, but rather only just over the ground. It seems more like a tripwire than a tightrope.”

Book 8 of the diaries of Franz Kafka.

The Russian writer Mikhail Lermontov, whose temperament and temperature were that of an ephemeral, changing light, died in a duel at the age of twenty-seven, leaving us in his character Pechorin, in his novel A Hero of Our Time, written in the middle of the 19th century, some of the most defining features of contemporary art. In the temperament of Pechorin, he designated elements we recognize as our own, like the idea that one’s work is the pale and defective extension of life, that the greatest work of an author is him or herself, that no human realization makes sense once it is complete, that the artist is the main saboteur of his or her work, that we are able to create the non-work, that a creator can no longer constantly maintain an artistic attitude, linear in time; rather, this has to change because we must always be another; we must show ourselves with a mask of indifference and spectacle, play and challenge fate. Pechorin, the alter ego of Lermontov, needs the grandeur of the immensity of the Caucasus to dilute himself in time and space, to stop being, to be tested. It is the same need that artists have today, searching in the immensity of what has been done, in the steppes of human thinking, for a place (never fixed) to settle and to draw new strength to continue wandering. Like Pechorin, built and defined by the energy of others, possessing, seducing, exhausting, invading, and taking over their beauty to later, once they have succumbed and are in love, abandon them to their fate.

Contemporary art operates the same way with its publics. It makes them experience the potency of the new, of the novelty; it leaves them without a fixed image, seduces them with vague promises of modernity, advertises that they are part of the work without their realizing they have become material, in disguise, in the work itself and, therefore, can live in it but cannot see it, cannot observe it. It denies them contemplation in exchange for applause. It plunges them into a game that they can never win. They are part of a simulation where emotions seek only euphoria, never descent into an inferno. Pechorin is a dandy with a magician’s cape, with the poetic electricity of Tesla. He is a deceiver who reveals himself in every action, someone who moves forward in life looking for the extremes, contemplating a game of Russian roulette that, in his world, has already become the last emotion, where the boundary between living and dying has been erased. Pechorin, perpetual individualist, saved from oblivion by a narrator who never knew that he offers us one of the ultimate challenges of today’s art in these words: “I learned not long ago that Pechorin had died upon returning from Persia. The news made me very glad; it gave me the right to publish these notes, and I took the opportunity to put my name on someone else’s work. God grant that readers won’t punish me for this innocent forgery.”

Felix Riera is the director of Catalunya Radio. He is author with Jean Clair, the Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, and other authors of the book “Beauty” edited by Donzelli Editore. He has been a Professor of Communications Audiovisual of the Pompeu Fabra University, collaborates in the magazine cultures of La Vanguardia , and also he is the editorial director of Grup 62 and The Sphere of Books in Barcelona.



The exhibition “RE/FORMULATIONS: NARRATIVE PROCESSES” shows us an attempt to present our Pechorin/creator in a new duel, a duel that does not succumb to the fever of an egotistical romanticism or the predatory light of modernity that has eliminated all nuance of commitment, the struggle to reveal that the world spins to expose more than to hide. The pieces in the exhibit underscore an effort to restore, to heal the rift between aesthetics, ideas, and politics. We are facing an exhibition that brings back political mobilization, disagreement, critique, and the need to discuss what is common and to understand that we are not alone. The strength of these works, photographs, and sculptures that communicate and question the processes of de-objectification to which we are subjected, resides in having delineated a discourse that triggers sensitivity in the viewer’s gaze. The works of Juan-Si González, Rómulo Sans, Arturo Cuenca, Frank Guiller, Cepp Selgas, Steven Bollman, Willy Castellanos, Michael Casselli, Glenna Jennings, and Armando Guiller, show us the degree to which our docility is a product of our powerlessness, of our voluntary servitude. Its calculation is recharging the battery exhausted from working to reach the audience through a speech that amplifies the feeling of abandonment in the face of the apparatuses that states have built to cause the submission of our will to change. Foucaultian apparatuses that Giorgio Agamben defines this way: “I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings.” All these artists seek to pierce reality with their images, to make us see. They desecrate our graves and myths so for a brief moment we stop seeing the stars and orient our efforts to see what we are walking on and where we are headed. It is an exhibition that motivates us to make the leap, to be awake, to let go of naiveté, to defeat the deadly and subtle game of appearances that dominates the relationship between what we are and what we project. The writer Albert Camus in his essay The Myth of Sisyphus, after considering the thoughts of several philosophers, tells us that these men “vie with one another in proclaiming that nothing is clear, all is chaos, that all man has is his lucidity and his definite knowledge of the walls surrounding him.” The photographic pieces in this exhibition will help us see the walls that surround us with great precision and accuracy. Pechorin, in his eagerness for self-destruction, in search of emotion for the sake of emotion, always refused to see; for this reason, he distanced himself from his time, the 19th century, to achieve what was his apart from the world. The works that you see here are the result of moving into our time, translating the complex relationship of violence to which we are subjected into a more direct language. A collective exhibition that takes us away from the steppe and returns us to the bustling city to denounce the dominant spirituality, which is based in the surveillance of our emotions.

Steven Bollman



Steven Bollman was born in New York and earned a BFA in Photography from School of Visual Arts (NYC) in 1983. After graduating he began his career as a freelance photographer working on editorial and commercial assignments. His work has been published in Aperture, U.S. News and World Report, Vanity Fair and Newsday among others. In 1987 he joined the photo agency Matrix covering Haiti's Democratic elections. He has worked on photo essays in Cuba, Haiti, Sicily, Spain, France and New York. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.
www.stevenbollman.com

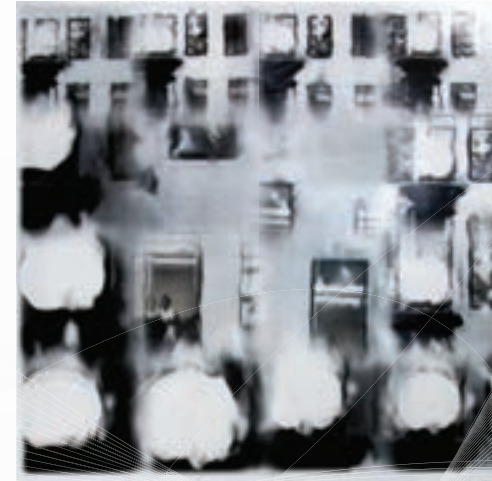


Steven Bollman,
Title: Triptych #1 (Massapequa Park 1983/Berkeley 2014/San Francisco 2013)
Media: Archival Pigment Print , Size: 22" H x 70.15" W, Edition: 5, Year: 2014

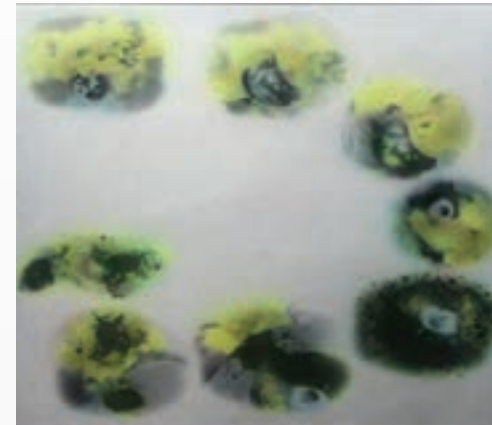
Arturo Cuenca



An art teacher preparation acquired during their studies unfinished in 1973 in the National School "San Alejandro," Bellas Artes in Havana in 1973 and specializing in Literature at the National School of Art Instructors, Havana, Cuba between 1979 and 1982. He has developed his work in manifestations such as painting, printmaking, graphic design and photography. Had a dispute with the former ideologue of the Communist Party of Cuba , Carlos Aldana, originated as a result of the ideas expressed by the artist in one of the congresses of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), on the theme of confrontation between art and ideology in the eld, overly politicized, contemporary Cuban society. This dispute led him to become a political enemy of the regime of Fidel Castro , which forced him to emigrate to the United States in 1991. facebook.com/arturo.cuenca?ref=ts



Arturo Cuenca,
Title: Lamp-Man-At Once,
Media: Acrylic on Digital Print, Size: 33.5" x 33.5", Year: 1999, Edition: 1



Arturo Cuenca,
Title: Aesthetic: Flower (Exterior-Interior)
Media: Acrylic on Digital Print, Size: 33.5" x 33.5", Year: 1999, Edition: 1

Michael Casselli



Michael Casselli is mixed-media artist whose interest in hybrid form and space have allowed him to continually expand upon possibilities these concerns bring to his work. A graduate from The Rhode Island School of Design, his interests includes large-scale immersive media installation, performance, sound, and video. As his work moves continues to evolve, these approaches collide, allowing his contextual and material vocabulary to expand, and this has allowed him to consider a broader palate of contemporary media in the creation of his work, utilizing robotic techniques, and homegrown technologies. Michael spent twenty years in New York City within the underground art and performance scene, fully integrating his early concerns with performance and the visual arts. While continuing to create large-scale installations, he found himself able to apply many of the same concerns within the performance arena, creating scenic and video design for dance and theater, earning him a Bessie Award for Scenic Design in 1987. Michael's work has been shown internationally and in 2008 he relocated to Yellow Springs, Ohio to establish the Manic Design Studio, a place for hybrid experimentation in all media. Michael is a recipient of the 2013 Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Artist Fellowship.

michaelcasselli.com



Michael Casselli,
Installation View

Title: Alex-video still-from the series: I can only speak in silence.
Media:Video still printed on hand made paper, wax, Size: 55" x 58", Year: 2011



Michael Casselli,
Installation View

Title: Andrew and Leslie-video still- from the series: I can only speak in silence.
Media:Video Still printed on hand made paper, wax, Size: 55" x 58", Year: 2011

Willy Castellanos



An art historian, curator and photographer, holder of a degree in History of Arts from the University of Havana (1993) where he graduated with a thesis on photography: "Nude as Objet and Strategy in Cuban Photography 1982-1993". In Havana, he worked as a freelance photographer for local magazines. In Buenos Aires, he was a photojournalist for the magazine Pugliese and for the music publisher BAM. In 2001, he moved to Miami where he actually lives and works. His shots have been featured in one-man and group shows in Argentina, Brazil, and the United States. His writings have been published in magazines like Arte al Día International, Art Nexus, and Nagari among others. He is also the co-author of the critical essay for the book of Cuban photographer Raúl Canibano, published by PhotoBolsillo-La Fabrica, Madrid, 2012.

In 2011 he created with Adriana Herrera, Aluna Art Foundation. Since its founding, Aluna Curatorial Collective has curated several exhibition projects that were hosted at Aluna's space or in different institutions and museums in Miami, Siberia and Monaco. His exhibition project "Exodus: Alternate Documents" with invited artists Coco Fusco & Juan Si González was awarded as "The Best Cultural Event of 2014 in Miami" by Artes Miami Foundation.

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Willy Castellanos,

Title: Series "A Wall", "The Gap" | "The Walker" | "The Jump"

Media: Archival Digital Prints, Size: 20" x 30", Year: 1998, Edition: 5

Frank Guiller



Frank Guiller was born in Habana, Cuba in 1959, an artist of the generation that emerged with the Cuban revolution under the impact of Socialist realism, a Marxist aesthetic doctrine that became a dominant style of realistic art which developed under Socialism which celebrates an idealized vision of the life. Frank Guiller works predominantly in the medium of Digital Photography, but includes video, drawing, painting and installations. Frank Guiller completed an MFA with distinction at the Graphics and Engraving on the Academy of Fine Art San Alejandro in 1984. Since then he has evolved with a very unique style with an alternative use of color in the photographic processes leading to conceptual works and with an extraordinary and contemporary simplicity to accomplish his vision and explore new ways in a changing world. Frank Guiller's photography has been in many galleries for solo and group shows, also it has been published in Magazines and newspapers, he has many collectors, including museums and galleries, he also has lectured and offers workshops digital art and photography. He works as an Art Director.

frankguiller.com
ello.co/frankguiller



Frank Guiller,
Title: Through my window,
Media: C-Print, Size: 24" x 36", Year: 2014, Edition: 10



Frank Guiller,
Title: Gate 212,
Media: C-Print, Size: 24" x 36", Year: 2014, Edition: 10

Armando Guiller



Armando Guiller was born in Havana, Cuba in 1961. Studied high school at Vocational School V. I. Lenin and graduated in 1979, continue studies as a Mechanical Engineer at Institute of Technology MOA, Santiago de Cuba from where is discharged due to political reasons. Upon graduating in 1987 from the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana, where he received a B.A. with a specialization in sculpture he participated in several national art exhibitions and competitions where received Prizes and Honorable mentions. In the year 1988 emigrates to USA and established in New Jersey, he earned a living as a mechanical engineer designing parts and process for GM, Cadillac, etc. also works overseas for companies in England, Germany, Japan and France. However, his lifelong goal was to establish his own art studio. In the year 2000, this goal became a reality as he left the engineering job to focus on his art career.
aguiller.com



Armando Guiller,
Title: Pyramidal Work no.6,
Media: Steel and Wood, Size: 21"x10"x10", Year: 2014



Armando Guiller,
Title: Entropy Structure no.5,
Media: Enameled Steel, Size: 18"x18"x9", Year: 2014

Juan-Si González



Juan Si González was born in Santiago de Cuba. He studied at the Higher Institute of the Arts in Havana, and was selected to participate in the first and second Havana Biennales. He is an interdisciplinary artist who chooses the media depending on the idea. In 1987, he co-founded "Group Art-De" (standing for art and rights) and began doing interactive performances in the streets of Havana and underground videos to talk about social issues in Cuba. He left Cuba in 1993 as a political refugee moved to Miami and then to New York City where his work has continued to have a social and political focus. He has lived in Yellow Springs, Ohio since 2003, during which time he has been awarded three Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Artist Fellowships, the Spaces World Artists Program Residency in Cleveland, the Individual Artist Residence Project in Wittenberg University, Visiting Artist Interactive Project, Dayton Visual Art Center, Visiting Artist Collaborative Project, Sinclair Community College, the Visiting Artists Program Residency, Kenyon College and Interactive Project Artist in Residence, Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio. His work is included in several private and public collections.
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Juan-Si González,
Title: "Weapon Training"- from the series: Stay-at-Home Dad.
Media: Photography printed on Luster Paper
Size: 28" x 38", Year: 2008, Edition:10



Juan-Si González,
Title: "Trauma"- from the series: Stay-at-Home Dad. Media: Photography printed on Luster Paper
Size: triptych, 20" x 60", Year: 2008, Edition:10

Glenna Jennings



Glenna Jennings is an artist and educator from San Diego, California. She holds an MFA in Visual Art from University of California San Diego (2010), a BFA in photography from Art Center College of Design, Pasadena (2006) and BAs in English Literature and Spanish from Pepperdine University (1996). Her practice includes (but is not limited to) photography, writing, video and constantly evolving modes of socially-engaged art. Her work was recently featured in the California Biennial (2011) and Ping Yao International Art Festival (2014). She has exhibited and presented widely throughout the U.S., Europe, Mexico, China and Southeast Asia. Jennings is an Assistant Professor at the University of Dayton, Ohio, where she heads up the photography area and is developing a program of socially and community-engaged art both on and off campus.
glennajennings.com



Glenna Jennings,
Title: Assorted Social Welfare (National Cash Register Archive), Ping Yao, China
Media: archival pigment print with signatures, Size: 11" x 14" (each), Year: 2014, Edition:1



Glenna Jennings,
Title: Untitled #1 (Project Gong Yuan), Nanjing, China
Media: archival pigment print Size: 20" x 30", Year: 2014, Edition:1

Rómulo Sans



Barcelona-born 1968. Romulo Sans' diverse training took him from his home in Spain to the United States. Studied graphic design at City College in San Francisco and History of Fashion at FIT in New York. In 1993, launched Sansmedia, an advertising agency for young, edgy labels on the rise in New York's fashion scene. Sans attained international notoriety collaborating as a stylist and art director for publications like Details, Vogue Man, and Vogue France. Relocating to Havana, Cuba, Sans' spent ten years refining his aesthetic, merging his clean, fashion-trained eye with his burgeoning commitment to cultural critique through artistic expression. Sans' daring attempt to capture Havana's true zeitgeist came under fierce attack from Cuban authorities, resulting in Sans fleeing Cuba in 2009. Now living in New York, Sans' burst onto the international art scene with his solo show "Crushed" at White Box Gallery. To date Sans' has amassed collectors from around the globe, including the United Kingdom, China, Haiti, and Iran. In addition to guest lecturing at the Pratt Institute, New York. sansinmedia.com



Romulo Sans,
Title: "WAR TOYS 1", "WAR CHILD 1"
Media: C Print: 24" x 30" each, Year: 2014, Edition: 1



Romulo Sans,
Title: Symbiosis
Media: C Print: 24" x 30", Year: 2014, Edition: 1

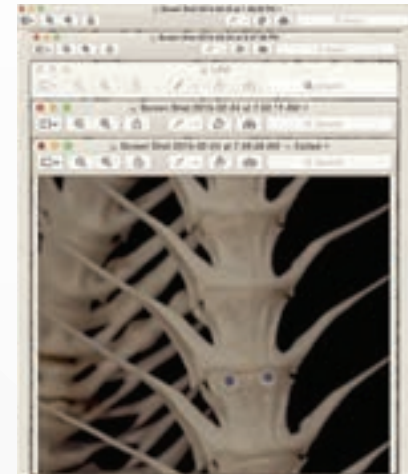
Cepp Selgas



Born in Cienfuegos, Cuba. Studied in the Fine Arts School of Las Villas. The National School of Arts (Cubacán) and National School of Design in Havana. Since 1980 lives in New York, and studied Photography at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Selgas is featured in "MEMORIA: Cuban Art of the 20th Century, California International Arts Foundation, Los Angeles, CA, USA./2002. With a vast corpus of work in the Visual Arts discipline, with national and international presence in Art Galleries and Museums for a little more than four decades; Newark Museum, Newark, NJ. / Paul and Lulu Hilliard Art Museum, Lafayette, La. / Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT. / Discovery Museum, Bridgeport, CT./Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT./MoCHA, NYC/National Museum of Decorative Arts, Havana, Cuba / Solo shows in Paris, France./Düsseldorf, Germany./Gent, Belgium and USA, among many group shows. He was nominated for a Fellowship by the 'Painters and Sculptors Grant Program, Joan Mitchell Foundation' this past 2012.

www.ceppselgas.com

www.selgasart.blogspot.com



Cepp Selgas, Title: "Eccentric","Lam(?)"
Media: Photography C-Print, Size: 30" x 25.5", Year: 2015, Edition:10



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Curated by Juan-Si González

Prologue by Felix Riera

Sponsor by Domingo de Montejó

Catalog Design by Frank Guiller

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