



LA BIENAL 2013: HERE IS WHERE WE JUMP! Participating Artist

Alejandro Guzman

I focus my artistic practice on the idea of creative misunderstandings through art. My work explores the concrete manifestations of human nature, behavior, migration, consumption and materialism through various art practices. By means of investigations in performative sculptural objects, painting, drawing, photography, and video, I communicate our inherent shared histories through art.

Born in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico, Guzman currently lives and works in New York, NEW YORK. Guzmán focuses his artistic practice on the idea of creative misunderstandings through art. He has exhibited in venues throughout New York City, including solo exhibitions at Taller Boricua, AD Projects and Clayton Gallery & Outlaw Museum, as well as group shows at the Queens Museum of Art, 55 Delancey Street, HammerSpace and Low Lives. Guzman has shown nationally in venues such as Galleria Sin Titolo, San Juan, PR; the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, CO; and the Toledo Museum of Art, from which he received an Award Honorarium in 2004. He studied at the University of Colorado, Boulder (BS, 1999) and the School of Visual Arts, New York, NEW YORK (MFA, 2009) and held residency (2012) at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

Alex Nuñez

My work attempts to create portals that reveal the constant mutation of seemingly recognizable imagery; alternate imagined spaces where time stretches and stops – and where transparent curtains blur the passage of time. Condensed clusters of activity are balanced with meditative breaks that allow reflection on physical space. A trail is formed of personal hieroglyphics, a compilation of seemingly meaningless symbols creating imagery, mimicking nature. Connections and pathways overlap, repeat and obscure in playful and obsessive configurations.

Alex Nuñez is a Cuban American from Miami, Florida. She completed her BA at Loyola University of New Orleans in 2006. After graduating, she completed international immersive workshops at Firenze Arti Visive, Florence and Metafora, Barcelona. In 2009, she received a Post Baccalaureate Diploma from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Her work began to take shape on a more massive scale, experimenting with installations and large-scale paintings. She recently completed her MFA at Hunter College this past Fall 2012 and received the C12 Emerging Artist Fellowship Award.

Q + A



Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

My work is based on a constant intake of imagery, art, music, nightlife, nature, etc. I am constantly looking to my surroundings for new inspiration, whether that is as traditional as going to a museum and looking at other painters or scavenging through a flea market browsing forgotten artifacts and vintage clothing. Music, movies, magazines, television and the infinite resources of the internet are constantly present in my creative process. There is an equal desire to mimic interesting textures found “outside” the art realm, in the real world, as there is the desire to create a formally beautiful traditional painting.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

I think that this title is directly related to my work and my process. I feel that in art, nothing should be hidden. Put all of your cards right there, on the table. If you are dishonest in your work, it will show and that will resonate with the audience. The most successful work, in my opinion, is the work that- right then and there, makes you feel an undeniable gut reaction. As artists, we have that one moment to jump and prove that we can offer up a different reality. A vision that is only ours.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

ALEX: Go to everything. See as much work as possible. Go to openings, go to lectures, go to parties, stay until last call. One cannot underestimate the importance of getting out there and forming real friendships, having actual conversations about your work and the work of others. Artists are your peers, your advisors and not your competition. I have learned more about myself and my work critiquing late night over a bottle of mezcal with my fellow artists.

Becky Franco

As a young immigrant from Cuba, forced to assimilate into a consumerist culture, I learned what it meant to lose all material possessions. This impact had a profound influence on me and my work. Large scale ‘Realism’ is the way I best represent my ideas. I try to find my truth by drawing from self-examination and observations of the everyday landscapes of my environment. I am always open to the inspiration and influence that popular American culture exerts on me.

While developing my paintings I realized my work is homage to Jacques Lacan’s theory that viewing happens from both directions. It was an epiphany realizing how helpless I am controlling how objects beckon me to represent them with their mutual gaze. Shimmering, objects have hypnotic power hard to ignore. Objects in make-up counters and magazines bombard my senses. Crystals in my dining room chandelier shining like diamonds are found in my paintings. Objects that ‘choose’ me acquire a



presence as if watching us. My interiors have emotional meaning. I have a particular relationship to each object that defines me and thus exposes my subconscious. Objects relating specifically to me seem to be waiting to be noticed and ultimately say, look at me! Material possessions contain cultural attributes that define our relationship to our world. When representing these objects I think how these objects define me, connect to our culture, and how they will influence the viewer. You can try to shift your way of thinking. Yet our subconscious always wins.

Becky Franco was born in 1952 in Havana, Cuba. She escaped Cuba with her family in 1961. She completed in the United States a BFA with Honors from Pratt Institute, New York in 1974. Always interested in painting large and real and very much influenced by the Photo Realist movement of the seventies. Upon graduation she sought employment in the difficult and completely male dominated field of Outdoor Advertising, where she got the opportunity to paint large billboards and the distinction to prove herself as a competent female artist. Becky became the first female billboard artist to join the Sign & Pictorial Display Union in the United States. She painted large billboards for fifteen years and when digital computer imaging threatened the outdoor advertising industry, she shifted her focus, becoming an independent art professional gaining many private Painting and Mural commissions. Becky's paintings were featured in many publications including newspapers and a Rizzoli book called 'Tromp L'Oeil At Home' by Karen Chambers. Becky has always remained interested in the expansion and refinement of her skills. To that end, after many years as an independent art professional, in 2008 she returned to academia to attain an MFA from Queens College, New York. Becky's paintings have been exhibited in a number of group shows, a two woman exhibition, and most recently at The Islip Art Museum exhibition about Caribbean artists called LA PLACITA where the New York Times interviewed her. In 2011 Becky became a member of Soho20Chelsea gallery, where she recently had a solo exhibition called CHOSEN, in April, 2013.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

The most important thing about my process is that I am constantly thinking of what calls me... to be represented or what I feel is important to me to talk about in what is happening in our pop culture now. I want my work to be relevant but also to make one think about what we are being bombarded with and how it influences us.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

Yes, I agree with the statement that we are Latino artists who make art. I am because of my birth in Havana, Cuba considered a Latino artist, but because I have lived here in the USA for over 50 years I am an American artist as well maybe more so than a Cuban one. I am constantly focusing on american pop culture and how it affects me and the rest of us. Yet, we do react culturally I guess to things that touch us as Latinos.



Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

I am a loyal slave to 'painting' my ultimate medium of choice. Billboards, magazines and popular culture directly inform my most recent work. POWER TOOLS and TOO MUCH IS NEVER ENOUGH BLING and their sarcastic titles I have chosen, convey directly to the viewer the absurd consumerism and bombardment of commodities that unfortunately influences me, and our culture.

The Paintings I painted of the interiors of my home, CLARITY, SATISFACTION, MARRIAGE, TWILIGHT and LOVERS TRIANGLE are directly tied to my subconscious and the objects that 'chose' me to be represented.

In the end, they inform the things once again that attract me, usually from our culture making it all a vicious cycle because everything in the end is linked to everything else. The 'dazzle' in the crystals of my chandelier found in CLARITY, LOVERS TRIANGLE and SATISFACTION are reminiscent of the sparkle in the diamond rings I painted in TOO MUCH IS NEVER ENOUGH BLING. It's all about catching the light and your eye's attention.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Fable 51 titled The Braggart by Aesop-here [the underlying moral of this fable has been understood that this is Fable 51 titled The Braggart by Aesop-here.

All of you use space in your artworks in very distinct ways, and that, among other things, is what I want to explore in the essay. For me, space is very culturally specific, it is not something devoid of the social, we give it meaning.

As far as The Braggart in connection to Aesop's fable and that 'you should act and not talk, do rather than say' and to HERE IS WHERE WE JUMP the title of LA BIENAL, somehow transmits or conveys to me a sensation or an underlying significance towards thrill seeking and risk-taking and taking the plunge with my work.

I feel that I am risking so much each time I decide to paint what concerns me and therefore running the risk of being ridiculed by my choices. Realism, which is the genre I convey my ideas to my audience, is not a very sassy one. Realist painting seems traditional, conventional and time-honored. Yet, I want to use it in an audacious way.

My interiors, which is a representation of my 'space' at first sight seem clichéd, passé and give a conventional appearance, but on second inspection...for example in the painting, 'CLARITY,' with its unlikely objects coexisting in one canvas possess emotional and cultural tension. The objects subsist together in that 'space' and start to stare back at us becoming somewhat to the viewer unsettling and unbalanced



suddenly we catch our bearings and we begin to adapt to the unfamiliar lay of the land 'space' and welcome the unusual viewpoint.

In 'SATISFACTION', an uncanny interior exists in reality as well as in this painting. The Crystal chandelier, and the bona fide baroque chairs which are symbolic of traditional values is juxtaposed next to Andy Warhol's, silkscreen of Mick Jagger's countenance, which is often associated and emblematic of rebellion and unorthodox conduct. This to me is how I Jump. I love to muck around with the viewer and let him speculate about what all of it means.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

I have been an artist all my life, yet I always feel like an emerging artist. The art world is so vast and it is always morphing in ways that we do not expect. Things change very fast and as one struggles to finish a painting series I always feel like they are almost no longer relevant. My advice to artists starting out now... would be to JUMP and to JUMP very high. To take risks with their work even if they run the risk of ridicule. Artists set the bar farther and higher and the baton must be brought further. This is the job of the artist to expose and break boundaries. We are the recorders of our culture.

Bernardo Navarro Tomas

This series of political works comes from the experience of being born and growing up in Cuba during the Cuban Revolution lead by Fidel Castro. My paintings are a narrative of historical events. I am fascinated with the idea of a propaganda machine and the way the government has used repetitive images and words to communicate with the citizens. My work connects the language used by the government with the sentiment felt by the masses.

Bernardo Navarro Tomas (b. 1977), is a self-taught artist born and raised in Havana, Cuba and currently living and painting in Brooklyn, New York. His works have been exhibited in several group shows throughout New York City and New Jersey. Group show highlights include: Bronx Art Biannual, SONEW YORKA, and the Multicultural Art Center in Boston. His work was exhibited in a solo show at the Qvaba Gallery in Union City, New Jersey and can be found in several private collections. He has recently been selected to paint a piano for the 2013 Sing for Hope Piano project that places pianos in New York City public places. Working primarily in acrylic on canvas, his paintings depict in an abstract manner his life experience. Bernardo paints the memories of places he has visited and at times from the vantage point of above. His current paintings have taken on the subject of iconography placed on top of abstract landscapes and he is also exploring elements of the Bauhaus movement and African textiles in a series of small drawings.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?



The process has allowed me to reflect on my past and to come to terms with the place that I was raised. Painting has given me a voice. It has allowed me to create an open dialogue with the viewer that I sometimes feel unable to approach without the visual connection.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I see one of the artists responsibilities it to be a critic of society and governments. One tends to comment on what one knows, therefore I will always be considered a “Latino” artist. Yet, the world is changing and with more global communication and business, people are realizing that we are more similar than not despite different countries and cultures. When I might criticize a “latino” government, hopefully someone from the other side of the world can relate and find similarities in their experiences.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Yes, the art of politics and language. I am intrigued in the art of political speeches and the idea of propaganda as a medium to control and manipulate.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Yes. I lived in Cuba for 27 years where I was not allowed to take a step without the fear of someone watching me. I emigrated to the US 10 years ago and began my journey as an artist. I feel as though I am jumping into a world that I belong, free of any constraints and free of the fear...I hope.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Do what ever you want and to follow your passion.

Christopher Rivera

“Whatever space and time mean, place and occasion mean more.”

My work involves the creation of conceptually based sociopolitical objects and installations. My work is based on the circular and interconnected relationship between space and time and its relation with society. From politics to music, from architecture to history and from the other to myself, my most recent work relays in the process of researching, studying and presenting what I like to call nonfinished problems. Sometimes I feel how these nonfinished problems make a bridge which



connect me and separates me from the real things, real life, real HISTORY. Whether I'm working in graphite, prints, books, sculpture, paint, readymade, tape, wood, or video, these mediums serve to manifest the nature of our fleeting existence, the unstable perception of our world and our place within in.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My process is feed by multiple things. It doesn't have a particular order or desire other than re-think multiple subjects that I'm interested in working with. I think research is the most important part when I start making works or projects. Also sometimes chance is a big part of my process.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

As you say there's Latin American artists that make art. But I don't believe we have to reframed or rethink, a term that is giving by someone in order to categorize or draw a line of connection between the work and the precedence or background heritage of a person. I think some artists liked others don't, but for me I really don't care since the work itself established a relation that always can overpass categorization. The idea within the work will always overpass any segregation term that is giving to the artist by the person in charge of writing about the work or artist.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Other than presenting a socio-political reality, mark by the resistance , time and space, mostly feed by history. My work is feed by multiple things; from music to politics, architecture to design to art, history to fiction, but more recently history and politics has been my fuel to work . Music is always a big part of it too. From the salsa fania all-stars to Spanish Punk (Eskorbuto) to the rock n' roll from jerry lee lewis to the tango from Gardel.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

As Lawrence Weiner say once in a Lecture I saw at hunter from him, "you know what they say about Hegel, take a bagel from Hegel. I really didn't know what he meant at the beginning. I thought about what other than taking advantage of knowledge and it's power, they play of words, that eventually become, metaphors and individual interpretations manifest in any form. Been the first time this biennial has a name other than the past one, I think is perfect in a way that makes you re- think your work. Or at



least that's what happens to me. It makes me think in what direction I'm planning to go and going with my work. Here is where we jump, more than a title I think is a strong statement, of the chances we need to carried in our work in order to achieve our individual goals, or at least mine.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Good luck!

Damali Abrams

° (b. 1979, Queens, New York)

My work is largely inspired by nostalgia, including my adolescent diaries and the television series I grew up watching. My practice is also deeply entrenched in the present. I have an insatiable need to document the moment through blogging, webcam, video diaries and journaling. I am also inspired by pop culture, critical theory and self-help. My mediums include video, performance, social networking and public access television. I am a member of the New York City-based artist collective called tART.

damali abrams is a New York City-based artist working primarily in video. She received her BA at New York University and her MFA at Vermont College of Fine Arts. damali was a 2009-10 A.I.R. Gallery fellowship recipient. Her work has been shown in New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Memphis, New Orleans, Denver, and Miami. In New York City, her work has been exhibited at The Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art (MoCADA), A.I.R. Gallery, JCAL, Rush Arts Gallery and BRIC Rotunda Gallery, among others. damali is a member of the women's artist collective tART and one of the NEW YORKC coordinators for The Feminist Art Project.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

A lot of my work is playful and often uses a DIY (do-it-yourself) aesthetic but all of my work has political meaning. All of my work simultaneously comments on contemporary society and history. I do not see my image reflected in the mainstream media or the mainstream art world. Through my work I am writing myself into history as a protagonist rather than/in addition to a subject.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

My work is influenced by pop music and pop culture. I love Michael Jackson, Prince, Mary J. Blige, Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey.



My work is also informed by the self-help industry, feminist theory, television, romantic comedy, X-mas movies, and the internet, especially social media.

I am also greatly influenced by Spike Lee, bell hooks, Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, Malcolm X and Alice Walker. In undergrad I began using my art to process a lot of the critical theory that I was reading in Women's Studies and Africana Studies classes.

My spiritual beliefs also influence my work in a major way.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

As I alluded to above, for a woman of color it is easy to be rendered invisible by the corporate-run art world and media. Rather than only challenging existing institutions to be more inclusive, I make myself visible through my work. I think that my work says that wherever I am is where I jump.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Very simple: don't give up no matter what. It can be a completely thankless job with seemingly endless rejection and little financial compensation. But if you know that this is what you are meant to do, keep going.

Also, find or create a support system of other artists who can give you feedback about your work.

Edgar Serrano

°(b. 1979, Oak Park, Illinois)

I attempt to deconstruct and destabilize cultural assumptions. This destabilization leads to an investigation of ethnic representations and their associations with hegemony and power. By refusing to editorialize or contextualize, I avoid categorization through a process of ransacking and utilizing modernist genres in conjunction with historical, political, and pop culture imagery. This in turn permits a rich amalgamation of fragments, a landscape of revision and readjustment as a means of introducing new iconographic possibilities. Through this process, different modes of representation struggle for primacy, furthermore the intermingling of painting styles and materials undermines singularity.

Using the history of collage and assemblage in the context of painting, I employ a variety of materials and methods: silver dust, polyurethane foam, synthetic hair, wood, coffee, animal hides, and hooves. Many of the materials are products of poorer nations such as Mexico, which provide natural resources to wealthy states at low cost without the prospect of becoming developed. Using these materials in conjunction with modernist tropes, like the drip and the splash, raises issues of power and deflates the purity of modernist painting. The surfaces of the paintings become a charged ground for negotiation, where juxtapositions critique the history of painting. My work



scrutinizes the issue of authenticity in painting, which the artist has traditionally achieved by adhering to a single genre or style. Pollock is paired with Bolaño, Picasso with Rihanna, Disney with Mondrian. The mixing and matching of painting styles moves beyond a simple collapse of high and low traditions bringing the domination of the Western canon of painting under the microscope. These visual and semantic contradictions do not however condense the artworks into a one-liner giving narrative closure, but rather serve as an inspiration for analytical thought about authority and influence through the power of the image.

A first generation Mexican-American, Edgar Serrano was born in Oak Park, Illinois. Serrano's work is concerned in locating and redirecting images of certain pre-established historical and political presence, the work often seeks to complicate traditional boundaries between cultural archetypes. His work reinterprets modern art by placing emphasis on the Americas relationship to the canon. Edgar Serrano received a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2010. His work can be found in public and private art collections in the United States and abroad. He has exhibited widely nationally and internationally. Serrano lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My process deals with and against the canonical lexicon of art history, while permitting for the simultaneity of radical politics, in terms of content, and radical aesthetics, as forms, to coexist.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

We are obliged to recognize how the fragmentation, non-synchronous development and heterogeneity of cultures within Latin America are re-functioned in such a way that their historical specificity and local struggles toward self-representation are subsumed into the vertiginous circuits of consumption, and spectacle of mass visual culture. Consequently, the cultural condition of Latin America is globalized while the very real crisis of under development is left intact.

Perhaps, what truly matters is to perceive the armaments of artistic production in Latin America, to constitute strategies enabling the emergence of an intelligent and original form of contemporary art in Latin America.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?



The writings of Manuel De Landa, Eduardo Galeano, Roberto Bolaño, filmmakers Michael Haneke, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Carlos Reygadas, and artists Paolo Uccello, Francis Picabia, Sigmar Polke are important influences.

Along with my interests in psychoanalytic theory, which purposes that, life specifically dreams and imagery are multivalent. Furthermore, the politics and possibilities of the reorganization of aesthetics to produce a means by which we can move beyond our current stagnation toward an unimagined future.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, "Without action, all pleasure, all feeling, all knowledge, is nothing but a postponed death. We must not cease from toil until we have created a free space, even if this free space is a fearful waste and a fearful void."

Perhaps this free space, however narrow or outrageous it might be, is the only refuge where the complexity of "Latino" art and life can coexist.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Happiness is overrated.

Élan Jurado

°(b. 1982, Bryan, Texas)

The human body and mind is a machine, an organic machine. Like all machines, the body and mind have tasks they excel at and tasks that are beyond or eventually become beyond their abilities. And as a multitude of external and internal variables present themselves, the body and mind will continually strive to accomplish their objectives. This organic machine will strive until the point of success or complete failure.

Elan Jurado is a performance artist based out of New York City. He received his BFA from The School Of The Art Institute Of Chicago and his MFA from The School Of Visual Arts. He has performed in various exhibitions, including Gifted and Talented at 3rd Streaming, Frankenstein on the Beach at White Box and at the C.A.M. Galleri in Istanbul. He has had press listings within The New Yorker, Art In America and Visual Arts Journal, just to name a few. And, he has also assisted and performed for such artists as Clifford Owens, Zefrey Throwell and Ohad Meromi.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?



The important thing I want people to know about my process is that I don't think my process is important. The process is a means to an end. The end is what has importance. The final product, the artwork, is what is important. I don't have an issue with my audience wanting to know about my process, I just don't think it is as important as some people may want it to be.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

First off, I agree: There are artists who happen to be of Latino decent but that does not mean their art is Latino.

However, I feel trying to teach the section of the community that would use the term "Latino Art" would be fighting something that is inherent to how the human mind functions. We like to wrap ideas up into nice little boxes with pretty bow ties. This allows us to traverse the expansive, rugged terrain of our minds considerably faster. This process allows us to think more efficiently. But, efficiency is a relative concept. If you need to get from idea A to idea B in a short amount of time and it does not matter what is created or damaged along the way, then by all means think efficiently. But if it does matter, then they should be aware they need to unpack their ideas from their boxes before they move forward.

When faced with someone who believes that Latino Art is an acceptable term, we just need to remember to chime in quickly and respectfully say, "Yes, they are Latino and they are an artist, but that does not mean they make Latino Art. That would be like saying they are Caucasian and a scientist, so they must work on Caucasian science. Yes, their background and the culture they were raised in does have an influence on how they proceed with their work, but if they are seriously focused on science, this also applies to art, then they should be working on something greater than themselves.

Eric Ramos Guerrero

Cortez Killer Cutz Radio is a simulation of a Southern California hip hop and R&B station. Its main programing consists of dedications re appropriated from late night dedication shows from the west coast.

Shows such as syndicated radio DJ Art Laboe's Request and Dedication Show and local programs such as Magic 92.5 San Diego's The Quite Storm have dedications which often consist of women dedicating songs to incarcerated boyfriends or husbands. Gangs use the dedication lines to commemorate gang members who've been murdered or passed naturally. Finally awkward



teenagers and couples celebrating anniversaries use these radio shows to make their feelings known. Cortez Killer Cutz Radio has a fictional progenitor named DJ Decks who rebroadcasts these dedications on a 15watt fm band in Brooklyn.

Other portions of the show involve interviews, discussions and live performances from guests. Past guests have included Brooklyn Hip Hop artists The Extraordinary Individuals who rapped about the Occupy Movement. Artist Lior Shvil who did a radio play about the Separation Wall in Israel starring a rat whose mother ran away with a rabbit to Palestine. Artist Norbert Martinez discussed the connections between The Smiths/Morrissey and growing up Latin American in the 80s and 90s.

Eric Ramos Guerrero is a multidisciplinary artist based in New York City. He was born in the Philippines in 1977 and moved to San Diego, California where he received a BA from San Diego State University. Ramos Guerrero then moved to Los Angeles where he produced work before moving to Chicago, IL to attend The School of The Art Institute of Chicago where he received his BFA in 2006 before moving to New York where Ramos Guerrero completed his MFA from Columbia University in 2009. Ramos Guerrero has shown his work in New York at White Box, The Ise Cultural Foundation, The Fisher Landau Center for Art and internationally at The Centro Cultural De La Raza in Mexico as well as Chelsea College in London. Eric has shown in New York and internationally including White Box, New York; The Fisher Landau Center for Art, Queens New York; Chelsea College, London, UK; The Centro Cultural De La Raza, San Diego, CA/ Tijuana, MX; Columbia University, New York.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My work requires a certain amount of patience in its creation. I trust in a studio-like methodology even if the thing I'm working on is decidedly post-studio.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

As artists, it's important to question the terms used to categorize us. The subversion of expectations is an artist game. Having terms like "Latino Art" or "Black Art" or "Pale-Male-Abstraction" creates a context by which we can push away from or embrace. The expectations of "Latino Art" allows for the refinement or redefining of the term.



Our identities are fluid and in constant evaluation. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Spotify are the mirrors that we preen to. They are instant and have searchable timelines. Infinitely additive. To create rigid frames of identity art would be to deny the works of artists of color or particular gender, a contemporary-ness.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Music, and cinema have been great influences for me. Recently I've been interested in modern dance. I don't intellectualize it I just watch and viscerally react.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

The parable is interesting to me, though I see the pentathlon athlete and the bystander as one. The artist must first stake a claim that the work is possible and then the artist must play the bystander and see it with his/her own eyes.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Perseverance is an underrated. Ask questions, read, and apply what you learn.

Ernesto Burgos

°(b. 1979, Santa Clara, California)

Using the tools and language of Minimalism, abstraction, architecture, and appropriation, the work takes common things and renders them once again uncommon – in other words, it makes odd again that to which we have become immune. Many of the materials used in the work have been discarded, and subsequently re-presented within the work after having gone through a range of manipulations. Each piece is recast, disassembled, reconfigured, or combined with other de-contextualized forms and forced to coexist in a specific situation. Disparity and chance take on a prominent role, loosening the control an artist might hold with preordained formulas and their consequent outcomes. By rearranging and playing within certain systems and formulas of construction the work uses the codes of a specific language to reexamine the language itself. It stands as a type of interruption in the chain of



production and circulation of images and objects, and in doing so opens space for their reinterpretation and analysis.

Ernesto Burgos was born in 1979 in Santa Clara, California while on exile with his family from Chile. He later moved back to Viña Del Mar, Chile, before returning to the US for college, where he received his BFA from California College of the Arts in 2004 and his MFA from New York University in 2008. Burgos currently lives and works in New York, NEW YORK. Burgos has held solo exhibitions at Kate Werble Gallery, NEW YORK (2012); The Goma, Madrid, ES (2012); and David Castillo Gallery, Miami, FL (2007). He will present an upcoming solo exhibition at D21 Gallery, Santiago, Chile and a 2-person exhibition at Halsey Mckay Gallery, East Hampton, NEW YORK, in the fall of 2013. His work has been included in group exhibitions at galleries and institutions including Galeria Luis Adelantado, Valencia, ES; Visible Architects: New Chilean Art At a Global Crossroads at the Embassy of Chile, Washington, DC; University of Maryland, College Park, MD; Museum of the City of New York, NEW YORK; Gallery M, Louisville, KY; Ideobox, Miami, FL; Second Home Projects, Berlin, DE; Apex Art, New York, NEW YORK; Kathleen Cullen, New York, NEW YORK; Carol Jazzar Gallery, Miami, FL; Locust Projects, Miami, FL; The Paper Mill Gallery, Sydney, AU; Casino Metropolitano, Mexico City, MX; and Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco, CA. His work has been reviewed in publications including The Huffington Post, El Cultural, Arte Al Día, Time Out NEW YORK, Village Voice, San Francisco Bay Guardian, ArtCat Zine, and Daily Serving.

Ernest Concepción

°(b. 1977, Manila, Philippines)

My works are experiments on photo-based and landscape portraiture. I employ concepts of war in the process of their creation, charging at each painting with renderings of fantastical elements onto straightforward historical imagery, and intervening onto tranquil landscapes with drawn armies marching across the horizon.

My process is akin to a battle being waged on differing surfaces (paper vs. acetate), employing varied materials (pencil vs. sharpie) and divergent techniques (manga vs. Photorealism) to yield unexpected combatants (Norse Gods vs. Filipino cryptids vs. Nazi regiments). This springs from a child's-view of a Philippine colonial past, in addition to an abiding obsession with Filipino, American, and Japanese visual culture, particularly comics, anime, and videogames. Compulsive patterns, lines and obsessive detail define my work, where tables battle chairs to compete with rednecks who fight aliens who squelch sasquatches who feast on campers. Sketches and doodles—the most



rudimentary expression of visual thought—burgeon into wall-size ink drawings that traverse painting.

The black-and-white paintings evolved from a much older series of ink drawings called 'The Line Wars'. In this body of work, I return to my roots as a traditional photo-based painter, but strike out in a new direction by drawing (pun intended) from an ever-deepening well of conflict-based imagery. Paying homage to the B&W of 'The Line Wars', I withdraw color from my new paintings to focus on the starkness of the 'battle' being waged, resulting in images from World War II that collide with scenes from my-so-called-life. I'd like to think of these new works as possible scenes from an unreleased war film by John Ford, with interventions by Max Ernst. Attack!

Ernest Concepcion was born in Manila, Philippines where he received his BFA then moved to the US in 2002. It was in the lonely town of Englewood, New Jersey where he began The Line Wars, a series of black and white drawings depicting opposing forces engaged in ridiculous battle based on the nostalgic references of childhood and adolescence. He moved to Brooklyn and participated in a number of art residencies including the LMCC Workspace Program, the Bronx Museum of Art Artists-in-the-Marketplace (AIM) program, the Artists Alliance Inc. Rotating Studio Program, the Lower East Side Printshop Keyholder Residency, the LMCC Swing Space Program at Governors Island with The Shining Mantis and an artist residency in Beijing, China via NY Arts. Through extensive studio time and experimentation, he eventually broke away from the formulaic style of the drawings and explored different approaches to conflict creating an entirely new series of works including painting, sculpture and installation. With a significant body of work, Concepcion was able to exhibit both here and abroad and has had a number of solo shows in the last few years. In 2011 he was both a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) finalist in the Drawing Category and a Nominee for the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant. In 2012, he re-established his connections with the Manila art scene and participated in a number of major exhibitions including 2 solo shows and an artist feature at a prestigious museum. This year he will be participating at El Museo del Barrio's 2013 Bienal and working on two solo shows, in Minneapolis and Manila. He is currently a full-time artist working in Brooklyn. For more information visit: www.ernestconcepcion.com

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

A great deal of my drawing process involves losing myself in the process itself. There is not much heavy thought put into the artmaking except probably the



themes that I have to adhere on (depending on the work) or images from pockets of memory here and there but usually I shelve these thoughts aside for they only act as heavy baggage. As soon as I lay down the pen or brush, it's all hell breaking loose. There is a meditative quality on the process that I find very satisfying and as soon as I finish the work and step back, oftentimes I'm baffled how I ever even did that.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I remember an interview of one of my favorite Filipino artist, David Medalla, saying something about art and cooking in regards to a question about him being Filipino but operating in a different country. I read this a long time ago during college so I apologize for the inaccuracy of the words or what he was really trying to say but somehow the essence of it resurfaced when I migrated to the US. He said something about an Italian chef making pasta, which just makes sense because that's what Italians cook. But if the same chef made noodles, would that have made him Chinese? Clearly it's still done by an Italian chef. Does that make any sense? Haha. (fyi – I'm not even exactly sure these are the examples he gave but you get what I mean right? All I can say is David Medalla is awesome.)

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Not entirely. I am a painter/illustrator by practice but a great deal of my inspiration stems from playing a lot of video games, reading comic books and hanging out by the bookstore Sci-Fi/Fantasy aisle and studying every book cover. The city of New York is insanely vibrant, organic, and multi-dimensional I am constantly informed by so many art practices far different from my own. I find so much pleasure to be bombarded by every manner of sensory overload my heart can't seem to take it – and yet, I crave for more.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

My work deals with narratives and storytelling. With my large scale murals and drawing installation, they are oftentimes created spontaneously–there are no blueprints when it comes to my creative process which might seem counter intuitive and conflicting when it comes to having a narrative structure. Also,



factors such as site specifications and the given circumstances also come into play.

As the wall stands before me, I enter into this zone where I lose myself, where time stands still and images from the subconscious and various resources pour out. The title, “Here Is Where We Jump”, resonates for me as more of a launching point—that certain moment in time where everything else behind you are mere illusions of the past and what is happening now is the only relevant moment – the only moment to “jump” and take action. This pertains highly to my working process. The walls and columns of Museo Del Barrio is the perfect jump-off point for me and I certainly cannot wait to take that giant leap.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

There is great wisdom in learning, unlearning and relearning. As I mentioned above about my work process, I would advice young artists to minimize over analyzing their work and jump into the process of making. And this “making” includes creating, destroying, and creating, in no particular order. There is a certain beauty when getting lost in the cosmic wave and if we put our trust on it instead of fighting it, life tends to take us to places we never imagined. The outcome is neither good nor bad, it’s just ‘is’.

Gabriela Salazar

°(b. 1981, New York, New York)

Through sculpture and site-dependent interventions, my work is perpetually interpreting and reconsidering the built environment. I am interested in how a sense of the self and meaning are created and processed through our relationship with these structures and spaces. Interventions in existing sites—utilizing a variety of media approaches including painting, drawing, sculpture, architecture, and video—ask the surfaces of a space to support metaphorical, situational, or experienced aspects of their underlying structure or use. A recent piece, Site Set, uses the gallery as a court, a site of exchange between the artist and the environs. The bounds of the room are translated into corresponding materials of the same dimension, shape, and color, collapsing and materializing the architectural measures into plastic relationships. The room becomes a sculpture/object with a corresponding set of specific properties, referents, and possibilities that can be “played” through nearly endless iterations. Recent works from the studio articulate relationships through the forms of shims, wedges, levels, and other means of making/measuring “right.” The works in Here Is Where We Jump are from a series of sculptures made from the remainders of prior projects, the remnants of unrealized ideas, and found objects. Operating in relation to their own



materials, histories, and situational limits, these homage/tools are souvenirs of an attempt at finding direction and knowledge through experience.

Gabriela Salazar is an artist, writer, teacher, and curator who lives and works in New York City. She received an MFA in Painting from Rhode Island School of Design, and a BA from Yale University. Recent solo projects include *For Closure* (Outdoors, the Bronx), a monumental public art piece with the Bronx River Art Center/DOT; and *Site Set*, at the Luchsinger Gallery, CT. Her work has been included in group shows across the country and she has also curated shows at 92Y Tribeca (“Optotype” with Lucas Blalock), the RISD Museum (“A Varied Terrain” with Martin Smick and Mayen Alcantara), and currently co-curates *Carousel*, an exhibition series on a mechanical slide projector (with Mary Choueiter). Her essay, “Another One Bites the Dust!” on the experience of contemporary ruins, was published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Contemporary Aesthetics* in 2010. A recipient of two RISD Awards of Excellence and a current “Hot Pick” by Smack Mellon, Salazar has also been in residence at Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, Studio LLC at the Jamaica Center for the Arts and Learning, and the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture. For more information, visit www.gabrielasalazar.com

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

I see site and material as situational readymades or opportunities, open to reinvention but carrying inherent and varied associations. My process is to press on objects that generally feels stable and fixed, and use that pressure to explore the tension these “stable” entities have with uses and outcomes that are more personal, ephemeral, or unpredictable. I appreciate that the associations I bring are often quite opaque to the viewer; varying levels of transparency and (mis)understanding are a part of it too.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

The painter Dennis Congdon, who I studied with at RISD, once told me this story of the “feral potato.” It had to do with a farming technique in which the ground between plots of vegetables were left purposely fallow, uncultivated. It was in these untended spaces where the weirdest—yet hardest—potatoes would grow, to be reintroduced into the main fields in the future. He was holding the position that artists needed to put themselves somehow outside of the monoculture to make impactful art. Being Latino in the US, I think we all—



artist or not—understand that edge we share with the “majority,” and both the energy and perspective it generates to be on the “outside” of it. At the same time, of course, we all have complex and layered identities. I don’t think there is a way to codify what being Puerto Rican or Boricua, specifically, adds to my own feelings of “inbetween,” but I know that it is a part of my self-definition.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

I often look to architecture and city planning as well as sculpture and more conceptual art practices. Architecture and the built environment are fascinating to me in that they very much exist and have a life as a “plan” before they become “real.” From inception, buildings and systems hold the germ of a “perfect” form, which doesn’t actually exist once it’s built, or used, or lived in. Maps can sometimes take us back to this idealized form, generalizing and codifying really disparate and conflicting information. When I look around, I’m searching for reality pushing back against original intention, and vice versa. In practice, this sometimes feels like I’m just making a mundane punchlist of my world; combing my neighborhoods for “errors” in construction and strange vernacular fixes, wondering what could happen next.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

In my work I start with the given set of circumstances and move from there. As site, “Here” is already, always, a moving target. De Kooning’s description of the artist as a “slipping glimpser” feels apt. I think “Here Is Where We Jump” is a call to action, or a pointing to the place of departure for action, which is relative and subjective. For me, having a studio practice, an art practice, is synonymous with practicing and enacting this jumping. I make art out in the world, and I also make it in my studio. Both possibilities are still based in a process of looking closely at site, space, and situation. As opposed to found sites, the studio is a more easily accessible place where departures can occur.

In this sense, “departure” also means transformation, or the striving for it. The wedge, ramp, and shim forms of my sculptures in La Bienal are simple, even dumb, machines. Mostly made of leftover, broken, and found materials, they are indicators of something being out of place, or missing, or inadequate to the task, even when they are doing exactly what they are “designed” to do. There is a small drama in that, which I think is very human, and perhaps also silly. In many ways, even when I am working on a large scale, I want to return the making of art into a humble act, and the challenge of working these semi-



pathetic materials into proud forms feels like that to me. Ultimately, they become stand-ins, wannabe actors, for both gaps and stopgaps in psychological, physical, and temporal space.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Find your people and be good to them. Also, what my mom still says to me when I am despairing, “Don’t look left, don’t look right....” I think the sentiment is to not be distracted by the successes and failures of others, by the difficulties that could confront you, by possibilities outside of your immediate control; that everyone’s path is different and the best you can do is pay attention to your own.

Gabriela Scopazzi

°(b. 1990, Lima, Peru)

Gabi Scopazzi is a Brooklyn-based artist mainly working in performance. Gabi received her BFA from New York University in 2012. She participated in fish n fam, a two person exhibition at Uncommons Gallery in New York. Her work has also been included in a number of group exhibitions including Creatures of Light: Nature’s Bioluminescence at Rosenberg Gallery and MOM ART at 6 Corner Gallery. Her work has been mentioned in exhibition catalogues for Creatures of Light and also in PS 1’s Clifford Owens: Anthology.

Giandomencio Tonatiuh Pellizzi

°(b. 1978, Cuernavaca, Mexico)

New York is both the stage and the subject for G. T Pellizzi’s series titled “Transitional”. The city has been a source of inspiration for maNew York artists, such that New York itself has become a figure within art history. As a foundational ground for maNew York artistic movements and innovations, New York City is a stage filled with constant transitions. Transitional takes these legacies as a point of departure and fuses them with the idea of New York as a subject and a stage.

By assimilating the vocabulary of construction sites, Project makes New York’s ever shifting nature one of its main themes. He appropriates, almost in an objet trouvé style, some of the most ubiquitous visual vocabularies and objects that inflect our daily navigation of the city. The temporary structures and surfaces of solid color (blue and yellow) that frame and mask real estate developments and city projects, inevitably become signifiers of obstruction, struggle, power,



profit, and progress. These objects are what Pellizzi describes as “transitional geometries” – geometries that conceal the content and protect the viewer/public from what is behind. Could this be a comment on the cold impenetrability of Modernism? Or is it subverting abstraction, returning it to the world by assimilating the mundane objects of our daily urban experience? Ultimately, one feels a profound respect in Pellizzi’s work for these histories as the viewer is invited to reflect upon them through the lens of Transitional.

The radical impact of Piet Mondrian’s arrival to New York in 1940 and the consecutive series, spanning from New York City to Broadway Boogie Woogie, reverberated with many of the movements of artists that came to define American art in the 20th century. Barnett Newman’s seminal work, Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue and Flavin’s Primary Picture, both reflect this legacy.

Continuing his interest in pedagogy, Pellizzi playfully interlaces the histories of the Dadaist readymade, Neo Plasticism, Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism, even touching on “dematerialization” by hinting that the real work is hidden behind the objects on display. What is behind Pellizzi’s monochromes, we are left wondering? A cipher for something soon to come, perhaps? The work also brings forth a playful experimentation with relationship between figure and ground, by literally separating the two and putting the latter on the floor, turning one into a volume and the other into a plane. Light and color are ubiquitously present, but also conduits and channels, in a creative sampling of some of our biggest preoccupations within artistic practices of our time.

Giandomenico Tonatiuh Pellizzi (G.T. Pellizzi) was born in 1978 in Cuernavaca, Mexico. He studied philosophy at St Johns College and is a graduate from The Channin School of Architecture at the Cooper Union. From 2001-2011, Pellizzi co-founded a few art collectives, with whom he has exhibited at the Whitney Museum of Art, PS1/MoMA, Centre Pompidou, PAC Murcia, and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and various art galleries in New York, Zurich, Berlin and London. His first exhibition as a solo artist “Transitional” at Y Gallery in September 2011 was reviewed in ArtForum and The Brooklyn Rail. This year he presented “The Execution of Maximilian” in collaboration with Ray Smith. Pellizzi lives between New York and Mexico.

Héctor Arce-Espasas

° (b. 1982, San Juan, Puerto Rico)

I am interested in images that are inherent to the geographic and cultural milieu of the Tropics. I appropriate and transfigure some of these images in order to transgress their current symbolic meaning in a sensuous play of



conflicting alliances. My recent work deals with expanding the limit of clay; exploring the historical trajectory of the medium such as tablets for writing, utilitarian and decorative objects, architecture and art. I pushed the medium's sculptural qualities to new possibilities in painting.

Héctor Arce-Espasas was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1982. He finished an MFA from Hunter College in 2011. Héctor was nominated for the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, granted the ISCP Residency and Van Lier Fellowship and currently participating at the AIM Program at The Bronx Museum. Recently his work has been shown at the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, Art Amalgamated, Marvelli Gallery, Green Gallery and a two person show at the University Galleries at Illinois State University. His work is also part of the collection of the Museu da Cidade in Lisbon.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

I see the way I work like a family tree is constructed , with different ramifications that connect to each other at some point or through something else, from ideas to formal qualities. The way I work, ideas are linked through one another in many steps, not necessarily sharing obvious aspects that can be easily recognized, but through layers of historical moments, art movements, conceptually and formal.

It is through the combination and interaction of various mediums and objects that my artistic process develops and ultimately achieves a unique interpretation. Recent work deals with expanding the limits of clay. Clay was first used as tablets for writing, utilitarian and decorative objects, and architecture and art. With old history of the material I intend to push the medium's sculptural qualities to new possibilities in painting.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Most of my work is informed by art history. The way I get to the past is not by looking for specific artists or works but it's how the ideas I'm exploring lead me to specific artworks, history and art movements. I'm interested in how images, objects, and concepts change through time. Throughout the history of mankind different cultures, in their pursuit of the ideal, have invested symbolic meaning into objects and elements of their environment. A symbol corresponds to a precise time in history and transcends history to become



universal. For example, the idea of Paradise in religious terms to the new idea of Paradise in a tropical sense. Also materials, like clay, its being use in human history from the first writing tablets, architecture to pottery. Many things that were considered art in the past are now converted into Kitsch, bringing forward the argument that to locate and categorize something in the present, and provide it with a permanent meaning is wrong. In the future, that same object might change its meaning and even its hierarchical position, where decoration and popular culture go hand in hand, both assimilated with banality and exclusive to what is considered high art.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

“Here is Where We Jump” translates into taking risks. Why does one jump? To reach higher, to get across something, or to take a leap. Part of my practice revolves around experimenting and to do that you need to take risks.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Following the previous question, my advice to young artist is to take risks.

Ignacio Gonzalez-Lang

°(b. 1975, San Juan, Puerto Rico)

Carlos Ignacio González-Lang (Ignacio Lang) is a Puerto Rican artist based in New York, New York. He received a BFA from California Institute of the Arts and an MFA from Columbia University. His work has been exhibited at MoMA/P.S.1, International Center of Photography, Frost Art Museum, Contemporary Art Center Vilnius, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, O.K. Centrum for Gegenwarstkunst, Fundacio Joan Miro, the Institute of Contemporary Arts London, Jewish Museum Vienna, Ex Teresa Arte Actual Mexico City and Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico. He has taught at the School of Visual Arts, Parsons the New School for Design, Columbia University and Escuela des Artes Plasticas de Puerto Rico.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

Research.



Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I am an artist that happens to be born in Puerto Rico. This makes me a Latino in the United States, along with anyone else from South America and the rest of the Caribbean. This is only a geographic designation that has nothing to do with individual choice. I feel that this type of geographical segregation is overly broad and reinforces fictional stereotypes, which perpetuate a hierarchical valuation of people, ideas and creativity. More inclusiveness of other geographies from beyond these boundaries might be a way to reframe this notion.

Julia San Martín

°(b. 1967, Chillán, Chile)

Born in Chile and exposed to the harsh rule of the military dictator Pinochet, much of my work addresses the tragic violence and persecution of civilians that occurred under his rule from 1973 to 1990. Taking this as my primary subject, I work to express my reactions to the political upheaval in my home country in expressionistic strokes that make my work singular and disparate from conventional approaches of artists who do political work. I choose to work almost exclusively in paint and torn canvases that lend themselves to experimentation with new techniques and contempt for boundaries. I encourage the public to see that “expression is always open to interpretation.”

San Martín's previous work is held in the collection of the Contemporary Art Museum of Santiago, Chile as well as numerous private collections in Chile, Spain, Germany, New York and the United States. Her work has been featured in The New York Times as part of an exhibition of Latin American Women artists at Castle Gallery in New Rochelle.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

For a long time, I have worked on the subject “the limits” in painting and in other visual media. Painting as an object. In this process I had the view expansive of the space, as a whole, as a package or container of my thought. On the subject “the limits”, I have arrived to the same starting point, and that “the edge is the edge of itself.” And what is most important, I realize that I just



found “things”, but the things are important for us, or for me. So, I am ready to plunge.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I think this cultural sorting should not exist. And speaking about “limits”, I think it would be helpful to open El Museo doors to other artist regardless the cultural group they belong.

Kathleen Granados

° (b. 1986, Long Island, New York)

Through my explorations I come to terms with the brevity of physical existence. This prompts my contemplation of the body, as well as the intersection of personal histories and collective memory. Most significant in my approach to art making is the recontextualization of fibrous materials, as well as domestic and personal items. I am interested in how relationships to these materials change over time, whether it is a necessity of the present, or carrying significance of the past. Through appropriating the technique of crochet, I am able to investigate complex issues by using a process that denotes comfort and familiarity. Ultimately, this communication serves as an observation of the collateral risks of apathy, and the varying degree to which a human life is regarded.

Kathleen Granados uses crochet and found objects to explore relationships between intimate spaces, the corporeal, and the collective consciousness. She received her Bachelor in Fine Arts from the Fashion Institute of Technology in 2009. From 2009-2011, Granados was a member of M55 Art based in Long Island City, and is currently a member of the collective Urban Studio Unbound. Her work has been exhibited at numerous institutions and venues including the SELECT Fair in Miami, the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance, and Friedman Benda Gallery. She lives and works in New York City.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

An important element of my process is that it is open-ended. There is no separation between my working process and my experiences of everyday life. It is in the observations and actions of daily life in which the connections in my



work are formed and perceived. There is, of course, time in which I am physically exploring material- but ultimately, it never remains within those boundaries. My home life and domestic activity have a side-by-side dialogue with my studio practice, so the place in which one begins and the other ends can many times be undefined. Somewhere along the line, it all becomes art.

My process is more physically demanding than it may seem. Particularly when working with soft materials, which typically involve a heavy amount of reworking and unraveling before construction is solid. I oscillate between a slow, methodical pace, and expeditiously working with a sense of controlled urgency. Overall, there is almost a quiet turbulence about the way in which my pieces are created.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

One important component of any label or term is that it invites challenge. The term Latino Art can carry various perceptions, though these perceptions are oftentimes confronted, examined, or defied by Latino artists. So although the term can retain certain characterizations, it is also a path to discovering the art Latinos make, and the concepts we actually explore. The more limitations on this term dissipate, the broader the context will become. Although “Latino Art” may create confines, it could be used as a springboard to explore greater issues.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Whenever possible during the year, I spend time walking through antique stores, estate sales, and flea markets. Not only is it a peculiar experience to see piles and piles of stranger’s belongings, it is interesting to see them juxtaposed in a completely new context. In a sense, a physical barrier has been lifted between people, and their lives are transformed into new, compound structures. These sites are also where I usually find formal reference materials, including LIFE magazines, illustrations from outdated medical books, etiquette guides, and instruction manuals.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?



The space in which a viewer is metabolizing an artwork is of the utmost significance in relation to their body and its movement. This is particularly true when considering my work that relates to corporeal or personal elements. The body is nomadic, but the self is possessed as stationary and impermeable. Disconnecting these parts from their whole and creating a secondary space between them confronts the transient and unseen internal environment of the viewer. It then becomes an observation of the effects of this new distance. Here is Where We Jump resonates with my inclination for encountering and conversing with this continual movement of spatial relations among, as well as within, the individual.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

One of the greatest and most common fears is how you are going to be able to survive, but you cannot be afraid. Let your life find its own balance over the next few years, and there is no definitive way you should be living your life while pursuing your art. It is important to have early acceptance that your life and your work will be in constant flux. You need to ultimately trust your practice, as well as your long and short-term goals. Where your journey leads is contingent upon your persistence.

Kenneth Rivero

°(b. 1981, New York, New York)

My paintings, drawings, collages, and installations function together to tell the story of a people trying to extract their history from the detritus of an unfortunate shame. My work establishes a painterly space where I locate and reflect on the plagues of personhood that have been fostered by machismo, mismanaged wit, and braggadocious energy. My images often rework the equally convoluted histories of both New York City and the Dominican Republic. I have absorbed anecdotes from my own family and the collective memory developed by the people living in these two places. These stories are what allow me to make new worlds that rely on confusion and wish fulfillment. At once bound and removed from both New York and the Dominican Republic, I find refuge in the syncretic processes of my practice. A major influence in my work, R.B. Kitaj, states, "The Diasporist lives and paints in two or more societies at once." Through allusions to music, art, literature, political history, and Dominican identity, I create an affinity between my work and Abstraction, Social Realism, and Modern American painting. I approach the use of text and color as an opportunity to create new moments and develop vignettes that carry symbolic meaning within a larger narrative. I am also committed to exploring the aesthetic forms recalled by the waste of human presence, the accumulation of paint that results from the restoration of public and private spaces, and the mimetic power of devotional objects. For me, all



these instances serve as means for containing human history and the energies we disperse through time.

Kenny Rivero was born and raised in Washington Heights, New York City. He received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in 2006 and an MFA from the Yale University School of Art in 2012. Rivero has been a visiting artist at Williams College and the School of Visual Arts. He is the recipient of a Doonesbury Award and a Robert Schoelkopf Memorial Travel Grant that took him to six Spanish cities where he conducted research on barbershop culture in relationship to identity politics in Spain. Rivero's has exhibited his work in the United States, Turkey, Japan, and the Netherlands in venues such as the Pera Museum, Motus Fort, the Stedelijk Museum, and Galerie Atelier Herenplaats. This is Where We Jump, the 7th edition of El Museo del Barrio's Biennial, will mark the artist's first Museum Exhibition in New York City. Rivero's solo exhibitions include 5 and 7, or 12 at The Study (New Haven), We'll Take Manhattan at P.S. 122 Gallery (New York), We Fight But First We Dance at Go Fish Gallery (New York), and I Can Be A King at the home of the artists mother in Washington Heights (New York). Currently, Rivero lives in New York City where he is maintains a rigorous studio practice and works as the Gallery/Studio Program Coordinator and Senior Museum Educator at the Brooklyn Museum.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

It's hard to pick one thing so here are a few.

It is always important for people to know that I collect things and that my materials are not to be considered found objects.

That I've fallen in love often.

That I'm very much in love now.

I worry a lot.

I'm anxious about storytelling.

Painting is home for me.

The objects I make are mine. People can have them but they are always mine.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

Unfortunate things happen when discussing an artist within the context of a cultural identity, though the same can be said for limiting the conversation to the formal decisions an artist makes. I recently had a conversation with someone at the Brooklyn Museum about the content of El Anatsui's work. The



person I was speaking to had been frustrated to learn that Mr. Anatsui preferred to speak about the formal and conceptual qualities of his work and not the cultural content they seemed to evoke, formally. To her, Africa was so present in the work that she felt it was a disservice to the viewer to not feature this as the primary point when discussing his work. I disagreed and thought that the work talks about Africa so he doesn't need to and to define his work within the African frame would reduce the conversation around his work to a nostalgic and nationalist perspective that pays little attention to how the work contends, challenges and appropriates objects from western culture into material for his practice.

The content of his work is African more because he is using and gathering specific materials from specific places that happen to be Nigeria and Ghana in Africa and less so because they resemble textiles from these countries. This is not to say that his decision to place his practice in Africa is not a conscious one but rather that his location is as far as he goes to control and deliver the African content of his work.

Latin Americans have a very particular dilemma in that there hasn't been a collective reflection on our history or been through a trauma that has unified the Latino(a) spectrum into one experience with one voice. There is also a lot of overlap between Latino(a) identity and history and that of African American, White American, African, European, and Asian cultures. To define Latino(a) art is to excuse the practice of normalizing art made by white people. But then again white people can be Latino(a) too so good luck!

Although I'm Dominican and am very proud of that part of my identity, I know my practice comes first and that from the Moon I look like I'm painting and not Dominicaning or New Yorkering, though I would love to see identity become a verb as a way to point out how arbitrary it can be. I think Latino artists always always seize the opportunity to identify themselves as artists first and foremost. In the same way that baseball players never profess to be men in describing what they do for a living.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

I do this for myself as a way to refocus my thoughts or to remind myself of the things I think about in a more tangible way. I make a lot of lists. I'll share two with you. The first list also takes the form of a word play exercise. The second is a less playful attempt of reevaluating my non-art interests before a long haul in my studio.



Rihanna foot
Comic book
Hot pursuit
Not for you
Hatshepsut
Hot for soup
Hot soup
Hot for teacher
Fish
40
7
Alvin Maker
Illmatic
Jeff Buckley
Playing catch
Hitting a ball with a bat
Oscar Wao (the person not the book)
The geography of Washington Heights
The United Palace
The Little Red Light House
Fort Lee
Rafael Leonedas Trujillo
Funes the Memorious (Borges)
The Library of Babel (Borges)
Borges
100 Anos De Soledad
The Alchemist (Coelho)
Peter Pan
Profirio Rubirosa
Ford Cars
Sweeping
Cleaning glass
Cleaning Formica/cleaning greasy Formica
Sweeping a staircase

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

I think the quote/title relates mostly with the kind of faith I have in the objects I make. There is a certain level of ritual that happens in my practice that requires that I believe certain things to be true which requires me to “jump” at times when I should pace myself. Here is where we jump to me is describes a very specific movement in a specific location, which in essence, describes my practice.



Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Constantly work harder than yourself. Make sure you have a space to work in and spend at minimum 2 hours in that space daily. Even if you're just observing or taking notes and not "making" spend time in there every day.

Manuel Vega

°(b. 1956, Bronx, New York)

My love for art began with my love for history. As a child, and until this day, I still am very committed to learning the past, and the tracks to the present. The "collective memory", where everyone resides, is now a realm that embraces me. The art serves as an information bank of people, events and lessons that have formulated my life. The range of expression comes from keeping a sense of discovery when creating art. In time, I am now able to paint with stone and glass with the same flow as my watercolors. The beadwork now looks like the mosaics. This creative traffic is very exciting, and comes from an awareness of purpose and impact with the world. My Puerto Rican roots have been the core of my message. The story weaves between New York City and Salvador, Bahia, creating bridges of identity and spirit within us. "Byzantine Hip Hop" is my own personal initiative to create art with the stories of these times. I am using a classical work ethic, [eastern European mosaic art], with a passion for reporting what I see and what I live. It's become a wonderful fusion of the past and present, with a sense of wonder that makes the hard work so rich.

Manuel "New York" Vega was born in the Bronx in 1956, studied in the high school of art and design [1970-74]. He is a painter, printmaker, muralist, illustrator, costume and set designer and mosaic fabricator. His art embodies the Afro- Diaspora of the Americas with imagery that celebrates the history and culture of the various communities and experiences that have formulated his life. Manuel considers himself to be self-taught, while also having conducted residencies with major New York arts institutions such as El Museo Del Barrio, Taller Boricua, and the Printmaking Workshop. His primary focus has been public art with mosaics. Having created a body of recent works called "byzantine hip-hop", the artist has created a fusion of classical craftsmanship with a sense of reporting the events of these present times.

Matias Cuevas

°(b. 1980, Mendoza, Argentina)

My work embraces the tradition of painting as a whole. There are performative aspects to it as well as strictly formal and intuitive ones. I am interested in light mainly and ideas of innovation, transformation and freedom. I like to think of



my paintings as visionary rather than analytical. I am neither interested in any specific reading of my work nor in any circular revisionism of Art History as a form of creating or adding value to a work of art. Value is created through play for me and my pictures are the result of my process and the formal associations that I establish when moving from one painting to the other. I don't really focus much on the images that I paint but more on the pictorial structure that makes them possible. I believe that to define myself as an abstract, figurative or any other kind of painter is to betray Painting's most intrinsic value: the poetic. The mere idea of permanently circling around one idea creates some sort of panic within that ultimately becomes interesting to me. And I think in the end it is the abstraction of this energy and the process of its materialization that matters most to me.

Born In 1980 In Mendoza, Argentina, Matías Cuevas currently lives and works in New York City. Following his early classical training at Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Cuevas received his MFA in 2009 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where he was awarded an International Student Graduate Scholarship, a Master of Fine Arts Fellowship Award, and the SAIC Excellence In Leadership Award. Recent Exhibitions include Contrapposto at Leyendecker Gallery (Spain), Friends With Benefits at Lehman Maupin Gallery (New York), Somewhere Between Right And Wrong There Is Nothing Left, at Alderman Exhibitions (Chicago), and A Person Of Color at the Green Gallery (Milwaukee) among others. He is part of numerous private and public collections, among them the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Rosario and the Museo de Arte Moderno de Mendoza.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

The mere idea of permanently circling around one idea creates some sort of panic within that ultimately becomes interesting to me. And I think in the end, it is the abstraction of this energy and the process of its materialization that matters most to me.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I have never paid much attention to these preconceived terms because every time that I think about Art itself, I think of it as a rather abstract form of energy, regardless of where it comes from or who made it. Therefore, if there is only Art, there are just Artists.



Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Yes. It is mostly informed by whatever gets my attention.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Action- it does play a significant role in my work. Nevertheless, contemplation and dialogue are also of great value to my process.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

To keep themselves open, to take risks and not to go to bed too late so by the time the sun rises, it will find them awake and hopefully smiling.

Mel Xiloj

°(b. 1980, Brooklyn, New York)

My work is an exploration on the radical use of melancholy. I'm obsessed with the idea of loss, memory and repetition and the fact that everything is ever-changing; turning our memories into vain iterations of past realities. I mostly draw tiny drawings in small sketch pads as I move anonymously through cities. I draw what I hear, what I read, what I see and what I think in restless syntaxes impossibly attempting to anchor my thoughts by leaving permanent ink traces behind.

Mel Xiloj graduated from University of Puerto Rico with a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. In 2004 she had her first artist assistant job in San Juan Puerto Rico, and has also worked as an artist assistant in New York. After completing a Master's degree in product design in Spain, Mel moved back to NEW YORK in 2012.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?



I don't have a standard process. I think, I don't think, I source, I make. Form follows idea (if I'm lucky). The only constant is sketching. Everything I do begins with a sketch.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I honestly never think about this "racial categories". My work is not informed by it, at least not in a conscious level. It mostly relates to the human condition and everyday trivialities. Those are my concerns, those concerns are multiracial. The context in which I work has no real physical boundaries.

For me, as an idealist in this case, there are not even Latino artists who make art, there are just people who make stuff also known as "art".

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

My work is informed by absolutely E V E R Y T H I N G. It's a reaction of the outside filtered through some very messy thoughts. My purpose is to blur the boundaries between both, or not.

I take "mental snapshots" of all this external information (music, overheard conversations, ads, literature, art, film, Facebook photos of strangers, blogs, etc) and then place them in a context where entropy has conquered everything again. These "snapshots" become my referents that I then turn into "Frankenstein referents" and I simply attempt to make symbols for them.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bial, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Most definitely. The act of jumping can be placed into many different contexts. I choose the one in which you use it to escape when you're running and being chased. I make art as an attempt of escapism. I'm an escapist, so I think that the theme of the Bial has resonance with most of my work.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?



Work hard-hard-hard-harder-be-curious-believe-in-your-work (or get to that point)-day-dream & most importantly make genuine-honest stuff. Always.

Miguel Cárdenas

° (b. 1985, Bogota, Colombia)

The objects in this show are pieces that I had worked on separately for a long time. Ultimately they found their place together as pieces on a game board. They are a combination of an abstract body and a concrete shape recognizable as a face, an elephant, a hand etc. As I moved the pieces around they formed an arrangement which made sense: a collection of animals, surrounding a human figure venture into space in a static timeless pose. They seem to conjure up archeological remains from an age that is past and future all at once; they bubbled out of a mixture of influences, times, styles, creeds and narratives. The drawings happened during the time I was working on the sculptures. They are a counterpart to the solid assertion of the object. The drawings exist in a world that seems to make sense within the imagination, a world in which the meaning of an object dissolves into an essence which seems recognizable. But I was searching for an experience similar to probing the bottom of the ocean where all sorts of fascinating creatures move slowly around, having been there since the beginning of time, out of where we swam, a world to which we no longer belong but one we know so well.

Miguel Cárdenas grew up in Colombia and moved to the United States to attend the Rhode Island School of Design. He graduated from the painting department in 1996, after participating in RISD's European Honors program in Rome. He moved to New York City upon graduating and continued to paint while working as political cartoonist, gallery director, curator, art advisor and set designer among others. During this time he started to travel to the Amazon basin in Colombia as part of an ongoing research for his paintings. In 2005 he completed his master's degree in Visual Arts at Columbia University and received the Agnes Martin award. Upon graduating he taught painting at Columbia's visual arts department. Miguel has exhibited in Latin America, Europe and the United States, and his work is in the permanent collection of the Banco de la República museum in Bogotá. He currently lives and works in New York City.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My process could be divided into two parts: first the distilling of the ideas that I use for my work; then the elaboration of a piece.



I have many notebooks where I jot down everything and anything. After leafing back through them many times over, some drawings stand out more than others. I then use these to start my drawings, the paintings or the sculptures. Sometimes my sculptures exist first as drawings, or paintings. Then they become solid objects. I start a painting or a sculpture knowing more or less what I want to depict; but I always go towards a direction in which the accidental or the unexpected is ready to take over and change my original idea. Without this change I can't work.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I believe each culture carries a deeply rooted idiosyncrasy, which to a certain extent, is unescapable. Our Latin culture, rich in so many ways, has had a profound effect on anyone who has been in contact with it. From its music to its literature, landscape, history, politics and art, it is not just latino artists but the entire world reacting to all these emanations. Categories inevitably try to smooth out the jarring edges and weird interstices where individuals are unique, indecipherable and wildly fascinating.

Pablo Jansana

°(b. 1976, Santiago, Chile)

My work locates the body as the locus for both personal and political crises. As I regularly address issues of architecture and sociology and culture at large, my newest works suggest repressive networks that also act as regulating structures. Since I am a collagist at heart, my art largely consists of unexpected confrontations between everyday materials. Even without recognizable images, my various media – resin, polyurethane, acrylic, glass – issue sparks when they meet, creating spaces observation and, ultimately, critical thinking.

Pablo Jansana has a long track record of solo and group exhibitions for commercial and institutional venues. The most recent include Visible architects curated by Christian Viveros Fauné; Washington DC. The Goma España fall and fold, The Goma España, 20 Minutes of weight; fairs like Pinta New York and Arco Madrid as “highlighted artist”. He has also take part in different residencies and other programs, including the International Studios and Curatorial Program (ISCP). He has won numerous prizes like Dirac and Fondart among others.

Q + A



Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

The process is from where the break in my work beyond the concepts involved, it is in the performative character of the breakdown process as “cross media” in practice which explores the construction and reception of images as unexpected since it schematized.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

My work is due to a universal character and is there at that point when it reaches the corner where the “Latin” comes into play to establish some specific peculiarity not necessarily obvious.

Patricia Domínguez & Dominika Ksel

° (b. 1984, Santiago, Chile)

Patricia Domínguez: My work traces, modifies, and imagines the genealogy of the relationships between humans and other living beings in the 21st century. A genealogy that does not mean tracing linear descents, ideas or people, but the images, categories, operations and proximities used to convey them nowadays. I am interested in transforming the processes of construction of these categories. I invent alternative personal approaches to get away from formal knowledge and its colonizing impulses of totalization. These new approaches respond to the entanglement of living beings through ethnographic, anthropologic, geographical, sociological and mythological operations that currently take place.

As the entanglements between human and other living beings are so complex, I utilize various formal languages and materials depending on the specific relationships that are being inquired; video, installation, scientific drawing, 3D models, coding, and site-interventions among others. My strategy is to invert the use of the naturalist language by disrupting its original use of colonizing territories and by working with alternative methods that are not totally contained by their hegemonic knowledge. In this way, normal notions of the non-human can be open to zones of indetermination and hopefully to abstract notions that we are not yet capable of grasping through current terms.

As a visual artist, I intend to produce an estrangement of the living non-human actors; to go beyond anthropological categorizations of them and to see and perceive them in new ways. I decided to learn the formal language used by naturalists. I was trained as a botanical and natural science illustrator at the



New York Botanical Garden and at the American Museum of Natural History. I learnt a language that I've appropriated and transformed over the years, as I use it to de-colonize territories instead of fixing their identity. My work is researched based and my interest in botany is not only biological, but it is also subjective, social and anthropological. I use naturalist operations such as collection, classification and exploration and I interweave them within media culture, the subjective and the digital realm, as we are currently seeing the world through images, establishing a visual relationship to others living beings through a new model, which has its own traits and limitations.

Patricia Dominguez's work is based in the genealogy of the proximities and relationships between humans and non-human living beings. Currently, she is a MFA candidate at Hunter College in Combined Media. She has a multi-disciplinary approach towards her work as she utilizes video, installation, painting, drawing and site-interventions. Patricia has participated in artist residencies such as "The Watermill Center" (NEW YORK, 2011); "American Museum of Natural History" (NEW YORK, 2011); "Sandbard Artist Residency" (India, 2012) and in the "Institute of Critical Zoologists" (Singapore, 2012). Her work has been included in publications such as "Younger Than Jesus: Artist Directory" (2009) by the New Museum of Contemporary Art and Phaidon Press, and in "Sub 30; Pintura en Chile" (2013) among others. She has exhibited at "The Watermill Center" (NEW YORK); "Matucana 100" (Chile); "Galeria Loewenthal" (Chile), and Sala CCU (Chile) among others. She was awarded "Conicyt" scholarship (2010), "Fondart" grant (2010) and "William Graft Travel Grant" (2012). She holds a Visual Arts degree from Universidad Católica de Chile (2007) and studied Botanical and Natural Science Illustration at the New York Botanical Garden (2010).

Dominika Ksel

° (b. 1981, Kielce, Poland)

Dominika Ksel: My works fuse science and the spirit by combining sound, video, performance and portable installations with psychological stimuli to intervene and transcend structured boundaries inherent in the external, material world. Often the work and experiments deconstruct the limitations of these binary social systems and power dynamics, offering opportunities to further explore varied states of consciousness and the possible dimensions to our being. These states are entered through vibration, sensory deprivation, rhythm, ritual and other forms of physical exuberance and duress. In many of the explorations I incorporate collaborations, collectivism and subversive ideas that challenge normative sexual systems, histories, religions and capitalism, shining a light on the architectures that interweave the energetic matrix of living forces. As a lifelong psychonaut with a slightly dangerous penchant for life's curiosities and phenomenologies, I investigate these invisible landscapes beneath constructed reality by incorporating humor, myth, the grotesque, sprinkled with a touch of poetry and a dash of the mystery.



Dominika Ksel lives and works in NYC. She was born in Kielce, Poland in 1981. Shortly after the fall of Communism, she was reconnected with her parents, who defected to Gainesville, FL. She received her BA in Media Studies and Studio Art from Hunter College and is currently an MFA candidate at Hunter. She performs in the electro witch house group, Holotropik and makes videos under the umbrella Magdalena Kakabrain. She investigates the invisible landscapes, influences and connections that intersect with our material experiences as well as the myth, media and mayhem bubble that invades our daily lives. She has exhibited, screened and performed internationally and can often be found collaborating in one of the 5 boroughs.

Tree Analogue

El Museo del Barrio and New York Restoration Project

A collaboration between Dominika Ksel and Patricia Dominguez

A space will be created catalyze a dialogue, where local residents became storytellers and mythmakers of the present.

There is one specific tree that has become a hybrid during the years. It merged into the fence, creating a new morphology between urbanization and organic growth. It is radiantly impure. This tree will contain a box with an audio recording unit. The recording device will be slightly camouflaged in a box. People will be able to access this box from the periphery of the park, as it is part of the fence. The storytellers can stand beneath the tree and press record when they are ready to share personal experiences, love songs, messages to deceased loved ones, dirty jokes, local gossips, commentaries on current events, weather predictions, marriage proposals, confessions, forgiveness, offerings, wishes, desires, frustrations and new myths. The tree will be also activated as temple, healing center, materia prima for essences and inspiration for wood cuts, weaving, as cabinet of curiosity and a new celestial body.

We are re-territorializing the park by activating the periphery with the installation, changing the park dynamics. This is an inversion of the panopticon, the non-monument, and a moment where the periphery absorbs from the center.

The formal arrangement of the installation refers to esoteric visual symbolism of the tree standing on the top of a hill; an axis mundi. A microcosmic version of monumental myths portrayed through a light hearted - Quixote style setting, pushing the imagination and the transformative and connective potential of storytelling and myths. Images of the sleeping Buddha dreaming of enlightenment, a fallen apple sparking theories of gravity or the search for the sacred Mount Analogue. Here, we put together a new cosmology. A ritual for recording the myths and stories in non-traditional ways. A new lore, removing hierarchies, where every story carries equal weight and voice. There



is no authoritarian narrative in this fractitious and rhizomatic method of simultaneous (hi)story making.

The tree installation is not temporal, but permeating the environment and the community over time. Creating a life of its own through new interpretations, exchanges, transferences and becomings. The recording unit will be installed from August 1st to September 1st. An oral library will be put together to give further access to the recordings and will serve as an ongoing collection of stories for future visual investigations. There will be several events around the tree involving other artists too.

As extension of the project we will include some events that will manifest into printed imagery of the tree, healing essences from its leaves, new symbols and enactments of rituals that will include several surrounding institutions such as Mount Sinai Hospital and Casita Maria After School Program. We will invite to collaborating herbalists, artists and musicians.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

In my practice, I used naturalistic and invented operations, in the hope of forming a personal language. Historically, naturalism has been a language used to colonize and fix the identities of the territories of the new world. The colonizers named and classified the specimens that inhabited those territories, helping to construct ideas of the exotic, and the other that carry a lot of idealization and misunderstanding. I try to change the genealogies of those same territories, by using and inverting the same language that reduced them.

In 2010, I decided to learn the formal language used to represent specimens. I did a Natural Science and Botanical Illustration program at the Bronx Botanical Garden, and in 2011, I was a Visiting Artist at the Paleontology Department of the American Natural History Museum. I learned digital illustration of fossils and recreations of ancient landscapes through 3D digital software. I've never believed in Natural Science as the most acute way of acquiring knowledge about the world, as this discipline studies nature as nature. I quickly hit a wall, as I wanted to study culture as natural phenomena too, with all the anthropological, sociological, ethnological and historical concerns that that intrinsically carries. In this way, I use methods taken from the Natural Sciences such as recollection, classification, archaeological excavations, (static) explorations, archiving and organization but I permeate them with human subjectivities and social behaviors.

The reference for my invented, once-removed naturalist methods is the amateur archaeologist, ex hunter and architect Gonzalo Dominguez, my



grandfather. For years, he has excavated a specific area of the Atacama Desert in Chile. He has discovered mummies, new species of whales, 16 million year old sharks, indigenous devices and artifacts, old toys, colonial devices left by the Spanish, carved bones, the most southern colony of green turtles of the world, old flags, indigenous paintings on the rocks, bullets, and collect garbage coming from the other side of the ocean.

Along the years, I have seen him re-arrange his discoveries in cabinets made of fishnets discarded by the sea in a museum that combines the layered discoveries of that terrain; The Museum of the Seagulls. It is an archaeological excavation that is open to time and space. All those objects were found colliding into each other throughout and beneath the surface of the same place in the desert. Every new specimen that was found confirmed or disrupted formal ideas of that specific place, and helped putting together an alternative history of the place. The terrain acts as a possibility of both accessing history and re-arranging history at the same time.

He had invented a new genre; he has webbed and connected indigenous art, popular culture, historical events, contemporary art, and his own crafts. As Paraguayan anthropologist, writer and art curator Ticio Escobar said, "When someone modifies images and concepts of the Other, it is only when it is advantageous to their own stories. When the appropriation is made with the imagination, it produces results where new and old forms become reanimated with radiant impurity". My grandfather has invented a radiant, impure and contaminated new genre in the desert - an urgent and personal life-gesture.

His amateur methods of accessing a terrain have highly influenced my practice. Our research method does not end with a thesis or hypothesis. It is more of an inductive, artistic, open-ended method than a scientific and deductive one, so it properly suits the broader questions we pursue. I make an analogy of his processes by using the virtual terrain as my own piece of desert. The physical terrain where he establishes his inquiry is fixed to some square kilometers. Mine is flexible and abstract. My fossils and indigenous artifacts are found in the flatness of the excess of information that is pervasively accumulating in an archive constructed through diverse sources of information. Most of the time this information is subjective and informal, as it is found in the web: individual stories, cultural practices or random occurrences. Neither my grandfather nor I, make distinctions or judgments about the sources accepted as valid. Every active component found during our field studies could be included, it being from the future or the past, fiction or fact, replica or original, flat or three-dimensional. They all form part of the data set from which we gather information.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to



deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I don't make "Latinamerican Art". My work is not what is expected from a "Latino artist". My work doesn't relate specifically to Chile either; but it is highly influenced by what I experienced while living there. Growing up in a place like Chile, gave me a specific context to relate to the world. The cultural, ethnical, environmental and political situation which I grew up allows me to see the NY context with a distance; with a distance from someone from a third world country. With a strange freedom that people from Sud and Central America have in relationship to the world. I guess you can say that from anyone coming from another country, but Sud-American and Central American artists share, in the core, a similar history of colonization and domination, a special relationship to nature, and a specific relationship to time, space and culture where everything is an hybrid; where everything is impure in its origins.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

My work is about decolonizing the genealogy of proximities and contacts between the living in the 21st Century. By the living I mean a planetary whole that includes all living actors: humans, plants, animals, bacteria, rocks, minerals, as well as phenomena such as pathogens, natural disasters, weather, erosion and virtual viruses. By inspiration come from disciplines such as Anthropology, Ethnology, Ethnobotany, Natural Sciences, Visual Culture, Geology, the Internet, Biology, Art Theory, Philosophy, Fiction, Indigenous and Ancient Cultures, and of course, Visual Art.

As the entanglements between human and other living beings are so complex, I utilize various formal languages and processes – including video, installation, scientific drawing, 3D models, coding and site-interventions – depending on the specific relationships that are being investigated. I have used various materials such as weed tinctures, rocks and bricks, digital applications, found images, and interviews. My strategy is to invert the language of natural science by disrupting its original colonizing use to fix identities and definitions of living beings, and by working with alternative methods not contained by the hegemonic knowledge. Through those alternative methods, I find inspiration in any visual representation of living beings, whether it is made by a computer or painted by hand 300 years ago. Everything is valid and useful for me; fact or fiction, old or new, etc.



Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bial, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

The project Dominika and I are going to do at the 103 St Community Park intends to create a new myth in the neighborhood. A myth around its plants and their possibility of healing the people that circulates around it and of putting together the informal history of the neighborhood. This project hopefully will develop into a new local tradition and will get transformed and expanded as years go by.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

I still consider myself as an artist that is starting out. The best advice I heard when I was going through a difficult moment with my work was from a Korean Artist a few years ago. He told me to have the calm to stay in my studio and work, work, work for two years without showing anything. To take the time to experiment and make so many works so I can fill the Guggenheim two times. Then, after two years, invite somebody to my studio. If he or she cries with my work, I will be ready. If they don't, I should keep working for two more years and stack my house and my studio with more work. He told me that art is like cooking rice, when it is almost ready, it starts smelling and people know that it is getting ready. But, if you open it before time, it will be hard and flavorless. I guess a good advice is to have patience and keep working, reading, researching and playing.

Paula Garcia

° (b. 1975, São Paulo, Brazil)

My research consists in developing an art procedure that I entitled Corpo Ruído (Noise Body). This practice operates with the capacity of those devices of the senses that can generate a destabilization of the idea of a body that experiences. I chose to operate on the aforementioned devices, because the latter are capable of producing distortions that can affect the usual understanding of an experience, by bringing about an alternative perceptive experience of an environment.

In my practice I have created a series of performances in which I cover all my body with very strong magnets, while I have others performers cover these magnets with industrial iron scraps all the way until my body disappears under this trash. The concept of "Noise Body" represents a body that is defined by a sum of three factors: precariousness, uncertainty and risk.

The magnets are elements of my work that serve to discuss the concept of forces. Not only of the invisible subjective kind, but also of the more evident,



social type of forces that work to consolidate a system of power that ends up shaping things like bodies, feelings, subjectivities and truths. In these performances I try to showcase bodies in disassembly, crumbling. Ultimately, what I propose in my actions is a performative use of my body as “material support in which the forms of conflict are inscribed”.

Paula García is a researcher and artist and has a master’s degree in Visual Arts FASM-SP and Bachelor of Arts FAAP in São Paulo. Her research and artistic experiences focus on performance and its relations with the media. Major exhibitions: The Big Bang : The 19th Annual Watermill Center Summer Benefit - Walter Mill, New York (2012) ; 17th International Festival of Contemporary Art Videobrasil_SESC - SESC Belenzinho - SP; Performa Paço in Paço das Artes - SP - (2011); 6th edition of the Exhibition Annual Performance Vermelho Gallery - SP (2010), “Expanded Gallery” on Luciana Brito Gallery - SP (2010), “Change” in Escola São Paulo (Art Encounters) (2009); Project Tripod / Video in SESC Pompeia - SP (2008); Virada Cultural SESC May 24 - SP (2008); collective “Mostravideo” Itaú Cultural BH and PA, Escola São Paulo - SP (2007), “Ravenous , grotesque and evil” in the Paço das Artes - SP (2005).

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

That the process is part of the work. I open my research and include each experiment as a work. Like a sketchbook. Process is the vein of the work where runs anxiety, pain, craziness, happiness, risk and uncertainty.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

There is no kind of border to artist: geographic, economic, social or political. But this must be in the context of the work. Dispense categorizations and instead make new propositions to change this kind of system that try to catalog everything, just to control and safety of itself.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?



São Paulo city and the relation in the context of any kind of work were my biggest influence. The layers that compose human relationships.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

When I include risk in the context of my research, I am jumping into the unknown to experiment new perceptions of body, space, time, feelings, etc.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Try to create a path from inside of you. Connection between your perceptions of the world and the works that will project as images, actions, anything that you feel that will destabilize the nation of the world we have. Through destabilization and disorganization of preconceived forms we will achieve new ways of perceptions in art/life.

Pavel Acosta

°(b. 1975, Camagüey, Cuba)

Going beyond the legal boundaries, and stealing the state property is an expanded exercise in Cuba. It has even become morally acceptable action — a payback for earning very low salaries, which are not enough to cover the basic needs of a regular worker, in a centralized economy. My recent work was born out of trying to translate this survival strategy into my creative process. Some of my photography series document illicit private businesses the government sees as a form of robbery, like owning a gymnasium for bodybuilding (Stolen Talent, 2009), creating new car designs, by merging old automobiles with modern pieces (Stolen Talent, 2009-2010), or privately using abandoned public spaces (Stolen Spaces, 2006-2009). Another body of work is developed using collage on different media. Stolen Paintings (2008-present) is a series of collage on canvas and paper, which I also started in Havana. There, I used layers of dry paint, which I collected from walls, and found objects in the city. After coming to live in New York, I turned this process into a working technique that is subordinated to specific ideas. Most of the time, the layers of acrylic are prepared in my studio, on top of a glass, to later use it for “dry painting.” In the case of Wallscape, an intervention in El Museo’s collection display, I will reproduce the painting hung in the wall in front of mine —Goat Song # 5: Tumult on George Washington Avenue, 1988, by Manuel Macarulla. I will collect the layers of old paint in my wall, and use this material to reproduce it at a 1:1 scale, as if my wall was reflecting it.



Pavel Acosta lives in New York. In 2003 he graduated from the Higher Institute of Art (ISA), where he was part of ENEMA Collective (2000-2003) a Group of research on performance lead by Cuban artist Lázaro Saavedra. Acosta is the recipient of various honors including a residency at the National School of Fine Arts Paris (France, 2003); The Award “CAFKA04:Peace of Mind”, (Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area, Canada, 2005); the Batiscafo Residencies 2006 and 2008 (Triangle Arts Trust/Gasworks, Cuba, 2006/Orkneys Islands, 2008) and a residency at the International School for Jain Studies (India, 2008) and 2011 Artist’s Summer Institute. Creative Capital/Lower Manhattan Cultural Center, NYC, US. His work has been shown in several exhibitions, inside and outside Cuba. Among them there are: the Havana Biennials 2000 and 2003; “Waiting List”, Mestna Galerija (Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2006); “Killing Time”, Exit Art (New York, US, 2007); “Latino Latino”, Instituto Italo Latino Americano, (Palermo, Lecce, Bari, Cosenza, Trapani, Napoli, Italy, 2007) and “Del Pí al Pa”, Villa Manuela Gallery (Havana, Cuba, 2010). In the last years, he has worked in multiple formats, such as photography, painting, performance and video. With a socio-anthropological interest, Acosta investigates the experiences of the individual in contemporary society.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

Landscape has an antecedent in the series Stolen Paint, 2008-present, that I started in Havana, Cuba. Back then I decided to incorporate in my artistic process the way Cubans survive the daily hardships, as the state doesn’t pay them enough to make a living out of their jobs. They steal the state’s property, to then re-sell it in the black market. I started stealing paint ships from different surfaces, all over Havana city. I searched for paint that was already aging and falling apart in walls, doors, chairs, cars, etc., and used it in my collages. The visual result was related with the aesthetics of Havana itself — which is very deteriorated. I am very interested on the idea of recycling in art, while it is also important for me to re-codify the materials used. Once coming to live in the States, I kept working with this technique, but the pieces started to relate to other concepts and contexts. In the case of Landscape, I lifted all the layers of paint from the wall I was assigned. Once the wall was in bare bones, I used them to reproduce the artwork hung in the wall in front of mine. Even when invited to be part of the Museo’s Biennial, this work takes place in one of the rooms where permanent collection is shown. It is also an intervention to the Museo’s permanent collection display. Landscape raises questions on the role of art institutions today, and their relationship with contemporary art.



Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I agree with you. I think the term Latino should be used only as a comment about the biography of the artist, and not in relation with the nature of his or her artistic production. This said, as in the case of many other contemporary artists, the biography not always is directly related to his or her artwork. Working with Latino artists should be only a demographic consideration, and not imply preconceptions of any kind.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Besides a great deal of artworks and artists, my work is informed by the aesthetics of the street: I am interested in deteriorated, aging surfaces in the city, in graffiti, in the traces that objects bare in the street —especially because of friction. I am also intrigued by the objects embedded in the asphalt, and their possible stories. These last elements have informed by photography and my collage painting in different ways.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

Sure. The idea of the jump, understood as transition and change, but also as moving forward, ascending levels, scales, time, space, etc. relates to my work in several ways. On one hand, because my work is very connected to my physical and social environment, and I am in a process of transition myself after leaving Havana and coming to live to a completely different, almost opposite, environment. It's time for me to explore and to grasp a new, unknown reality, and this is changing my work.

Concerning my collage series in general, the title relates to my interest in diverting the meaning, the use and purpose of the materials I am working with. In Landscape particularly, I am intervening not only the museum wall, but the concept of display the Museo is using for its permanent collection. I am sacrificing a museum wall to do my art, while this wall will stop exhibiting, to start mirroring another artwork... these perspectives change the role and purpose of the museum as an institution.



Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

I would advise them to stay focused, and be able to translate all living experiences—even those that seem to be so far from art— into a stimulus for creation. I would also ask them to take advantage of the great national and international network of artist's residencies and grants. They are the best and most affordable way to keep learning and being informed after coming out of the school, to do networking and travel, and to definitively find new inspirations and relationships to your work.

Ramón Miranda Beltrán

°(b. 1982, San Juan, Puerto Rico)

The technical aspect, or the process of production presented in my work directly relates to the concept I am interested in conveying: how mixing and molding concrete becomes art labor. The breakdown of the surfaces causes the pieces to become cultural objects in ruin. The foreground is worked mechanically and the background, which is also the support, is worked with manual labor. The criticality of the work lies in both the production and the consumption, formally placing it at a middle point between art-as-a-means-to-an-end (conceptual) and art-as-an-end-in-itself (minimalism). I work to get rid of the individualistic gesture, but keep the labor. In this sense, I value autonomous art and intend to make an object that embodies my research as well as my opinion on the subject. The psychical whole of the work must convey the same thing as what is printed on it (image or text). What I look for in content is to portray instances where tension with the state exposes the coercive power of free societies, to highlight a moment where contradictions are somewhat clear and point to cracks in the system.

I believe that the work should embody or be standing very close to what it is criticizing. My interests lie in installing work in an exhibition space as well as outside of it. I understand the exhibition space as a space for theory. In this space, it is easier for an object to become introspective, making available an opportunity to take the art object hostage. Concerning artwork on the street or public work, my intentions are political. If I intervene a monument to change its meaning or create one to commemorate an event that I consider important in the history of a particular place, my intent is to change the physical personality of the public space. This objects or interventions may last weeks, days or hours – the permanence is not important in this case. The fact that the work can be or is removed by the city or destroyed by its audience shows that the issue or the place itself is a polemical one, where meaning becomes dynamic and change is possible.



Ramón Miranda Beltrán transfers archival photographic images to slabs of raw concrete. Based on extensive research, he chooses and transforms the ephemeral material of newspapers and other documents into solid rectangular stacks. By displaying them in the gallery, the piles of concrete gesture toward a cyclical accumulation of crises, movements from one extreme to the other, and show no easy way out. Beltrán was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1982. He studied photography at La Universidad de Puerto Rico where he completed his BA in 2008. In 2012 he earned his MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been included in exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Puerto Rico and the Institute of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture, Chicago, among elsewhere, and in 2009 as part of the 2nd Triennial Poli/Grafica, San Juan. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

Right now, what is most important about my work is the research, the work does something for me that might not do to a viewer and that is one of the reasons I try for the work to express formally what it's "content" is about. In a sense I try to combine in a single object a form that is "retinal" and "conceptual".

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

I think that a global civilization is beyond nations, the trick is how to balance cultural identity and inclusion. One could lead us to xenophobia and the latter to a seamless totalitarian culture. Maybe and I have not set my mind on this yet, "culturally" we are the product of chance and in that sense cultures are not comparable also because each culture has its own set of subjective principles it becomes a very difficult subject to give value judgment. The only concept that can trump cultural identity and this is the reason I believe we are beyond nations is the concept of freedom. "Peace is the state of differentiation without domination, with the differentiated participating in each other." - Theodor W. Adorno, "On Subject and Object" in *Critical Models*, trans. Henry W. Pickford, (Columbia University Press, 1998), 247.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance



artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

My work is informed by, Liam Gillick, Thomas Hirschhorn, Leon Golub, Jenny Holzer, Allora and Calzadilla, Barbara Kruger, Glen Ligon, Félix González-Torres, Theaster Gates, Donald Judd, Kerry James Marshall, Arnaldo Roche Rabel, Robert Smithson and Sol Lewitt.

Also, by los macheteros, the black panther party, the whether underground, Fred Hampton, Hegel, Kant, Marx, Luxemburg, Nietzsche, Benjamin, Adorno, Harvey and Zizek.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

“Praxis is essential if we are ever to be liberated from the dominion of practical people and practical ideals. The trouble with this view is that it results in the prohibition of thinking. Very little is needed to turn the resistance against repression repressively against those who- little as they might wish to glorify their state of being- do not desert the standpoint that they have come to occupy.” -Theodor W. Adorno, “Resignation,” in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein (Routledge, 1991), 199.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

I am an artist starting out...

Risa Puno

°(b. 1981, Louisville, Kentucky)

I make interactive installations and sculptures inspired by elements of everyday life. Everywhere around us there are symbols, colors, sounds, and smells that act as emotional triggers or instinctual cues. I use these signifiers to create my own playful versions of familiar pastimes or functional objects. My artmaking process begins with an investigation of human impulse and decision-making, as well as an examination of the role objects play in shaping those behaviors. From my findings, I attempt to distill the underlying logic of a particular idea, emotion, or sentiment. I then set out to literalize that abstract concept or feeling, converting it into a tangible physical experience. The finished work is participatory in nature, and often incorporates multi-sensory methods to elicit feelings of nostalgia, desire, comfort, elation, or even frustration. The key to understanding my work is to physically engage with it — to use it, play it, touch it, smell it, and sometimes taste it. While I make every



effort to craft objects that are beautiful and alluring, my main objective is to create evocative and memorable experiences for the people who use them.

Risa Puno has exhibited at national and international venues, including: The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Socrates Sculpture Park, SculptureCenter, NURTUREart, Flux Factory, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, apexart, Queens Museum of Art, Galerie Stefan Röpke in Cologne, Germany, and MMX Open Art Venue in Berlin, Germany. She participated in the Artist in the Marketplace Program at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, as well as the Art and Law Residency Program with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Her work has been written about in publications such as: Hyperallergic, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The New Yorker, and artnet Magazine. Puno studied art and medicine at Brown University, and earned her MFA from New York University. She grew up in Louisville, Kentucky where she fostered a love for miniature golf and all things deep-fried.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My process is usually split into two parts: (1) the hyper-organized research and planning phase [e.g., sitting at my computer, sourcing materials, looking up building methods, making calculations, and creating detailed plans] and (2) the semi-chaotic testing and construction phase [e.g., making a mess in my studio, experimenting with techniques, assessing functionality, taking things apart, and putting things together]. But whether I am at my computer or at my studio, I generally work alone.

However, the process leading up to this exhibition was somewhat atypical for me. For La Bial, I was invited to recreate my disco ball piñata from 2010. The making of the piñata itself was largely the same as before: planning every last detail in advance and working mostly in solitude. This time around though, I decided to do something different with the contents of the piñata, stepping outside my usual practice by reaching out to the other artists in the exhibition. I asked them if they would be willing to contribute objects to put inside my piñata that somehow represent their own work.

I was pleasantly surprised by how many of the artists agreed to participate; the majority of the artists in the exhibition (and a curator!) will be represented in my piñata. Their contributions include: found objects that relate to their work in the show, artifacts of their artmaking process (like material remnants, test objects, etc.), and even some special pieces created just for my project. I packaged them separately in sealed plastic bags with labels bearing information about the contents, treating each object like part evidence/specimen and part celebrity collectable.



The process of gathering everything was a little tough for me because I was not accustomed to fielding so many emails at once or coordinating pickups with so many different people's schedules and locations... and especially because I was still in the middle of the construction phase. In between applying layers of paper mâché to a beach ball or gluing on about a bajillion little tiles, I ran (sometimes literally) all over the NYC area collecting things from different artists. I almost never knew what they would be giving me, so I had no idea how heavy, bulky, or delicate their item(s) would be, or if I had the appropriate bag, box, or folder to put it in. I could often be found standing in front of a subway map with a bunch of bags hanging off of me, looking like a lost pack mule.

And while some moments felt like excerpts from a confusing nightmare, this was ultimately an extremely rewarding experience. Every day was like a mini-adventure where I had to learn-as-I-go. I loved the excitement in the split second before an artist revealed his or her contribution to me. And it warmed my heart to find out how incredibly generous and collaborative my fellow La Bial artists are. I have never before had the opportunity to become acquainted with the other exhibiting artists in this way, discovering so much about them beyond just their artwork. They opened up their studios to me, showed me how they think and create, told me about their day jobs, welcomed me into their homes, introduced me to their friends and families, and shared the best and the worst stories of their lives. It was my privilege and an absolute pleasure to meet them and get to know them a little better, and I feel like they gave me so much more than just objects to put inside my piñata.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

Rather than letting ethnic labels serve as boundaries, I think it is more useful to consider how connective common roots can be. As a Filipina who grew up in Kentucky, I would likely never be chosen as the poster child for Latino Art and Artists. However, my upbringing does show some evidence of a culture once colonized by Spain. Aside from bearing a Spanish full name (Raquel Luisa), I was raised Roman Catholic and grew up eating fried plantains with our own versions of adobo and paella. To this day, my mother still refers to me as "mija."

There is an understanding that comes with even the simplest shared experience. It makes it easier to connect to one another, and it serves as a place to start a conversation about anything... you could even call it our "jumping off point."



Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Like most artists, I have my own art heroes, such as Felix Gonzales-Torres, Paul Ramirez Jonas, and Rirkrit Tiravanija. I love art that is generous and is not afraid to be accessible. However, my ideas most often stem from places outside of the art world. My formal influences are pretty obvious, since I create my own versions of familiar pastimes or existing functioning objects (like disco balls, vending machines, and miniature golf courses). Other than that, my work is informed by many of the things around me, especially: all types of product packaging, toys and games, retro appliances, architecture, office supplies, candy, tools of any kind, scientific equipment, advertising and marketing spreads, and store window displays. When I am looking for visual inspiration, I like to go to IKEA, Staples, Duane Reade, FAO Schwartz, or the grocery store. But by far, the biggest influence on my work is what I take from the conversations that I have with people and how they share their experiences with me. This exchange is what truly fuels my work.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bial, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

I think the title Here Is Where We Jump makes a lot of sense with my work. In fact, I settled on the concept for my piece with the curators' mission in mind: to create a more collaborative experience that gives more insight into the thought and methodologies behind the artwork.

Titled 'Breaking Bial,' my piece is a piñata that looks and functions like a real disco ball, filled with objects given to me by the artists in the exhibition. The contents of my piñata are intended to represent our collective inspiration, ideas, and processes. During most of the exhibition, my piece will operate on a motor with pin spotlights, just like a regular mirror ball reflecting light around the room. After a few months, the public will be invited to come and smash my shiny, celebratory object, putting all the artists' contributions up for grabs.

As well as giving the artists an additional way to participate in the exhibition, 'Breaking Bial' also provides other people with the chance to transform themselves from "viewers" into "doers." Anyone will have the opportunity to step up and try to break my piñata, and anyone will have the opportunity to scramble to own an object from a La Bial artist. By participating in the event, anyone can become a "jumper" too.



Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

- 1) Find your own definition of success. Careers take shape in many different ways. There are no absolute right or wrong paths, and there are no universal goals.
- 2) Get good at rejection. Even if you do not get the answer you want, it still means that someone took the time to look at your work. Plus, there is a lesson in every setback... but it is up to you to find it.
- 3) Stay true to yourself. You are the only one who can sustain your practice, so you need to believe in what you are doing. If you are proud of what you bring into this world, then you know that your time is being well spent.

Sara Jimenez & Kaitlynn Redell

°(b. 1984, London, ON)

°(b. 1985, Santa Cruz California)

RedellJimenez have been working on an ongoing project addressing the complex manner in which corporeal identification, personal history, and double consciousness each relate to site. Their process stems from their mutual interest in the concept of “inbetweenness.” “Inbetweenness” is a re-conceptualization of “identity”; it is psychological space of fluidity and negotiation, in which predetermined categories of the body, gender and history are constantly forming. Their investment in categorization of the body stems from personal experience; both come from mixed ancestry. Through their continual dialogue around heritage, ethnicity and cultural histories, they have developed a multi-media project of performance, installation, and video. Together they have created an amorphous red fabric bodysuit that is a metaphor for the uncategorizable body. The suit transforms their bodies, choreographs their movements, and allows them to perform as a new entity. It functions as a connector and binder, as they negotiate their interdependency. Redell & Jimenez’s performances explore the restlessness of hybrid identity and double consciousness.

Sara Jimenez and Kaitlynn Redell met as MFA Graduate students at Parsons the New School for Design. Both received the New School University Merit Award for 2012-2013. They have been engaged in intense collaboration since attending Site + Sight, a visual research collaboration in Beijing, China and The Gobi Desert, alongside MFA Director Simone Douglas. Since forming Redell & Jimenez, they have presented their work at Hunter College’s Focus and Motivation and were published in NYU’s interdisciplinary journal, Anamesa. Recently, their work has been shown at NYCAMS and The Fowler Arts Gallery.



Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

Because we work collaboratively, clear communication is necessary. In some collaborations, people take on different roles. In ours, we tend to make decisions side by side, every step of the way. We each bring different strengths and mediums to the work, but it is important that all the decision making is done together. Another aspect of our collaboration is the element of play. Our best ideas come from beginning a project intuitively and allowing an element of playfulness to enter.

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

Both of us come from multi-racial and multi-cultural backgrounds. Our work further complicates the notion of fixed identity. We are interested in the concept of 'inbetweenness' where identity is in a constant state of fluidity. It is reductive to limit an artist's work based on a generalized category of cultural identity. We believe that it is necessary to reframe the labeling of artists and their work by challenging the preexisting assumptions and vocabulary around racial and cultural identity.

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Formally, our work is inspired by other performance artists as well as dance and movement forms (such as Pina Bausch and Butoh). We both draw inspiration from art history but we also respond directly to natural landscapes and architectural sites. In addition, our work is fueled by a combination of personal narrative as well as socio-cultural histories, such as the history of immigration to New York in the late 19th/ early 20th century. Overall, we would say that it is the combination of all if these elements that inspire us.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

This idea of movement between, or transitioning (jumping) from one space to another absolutely resonates with our work. Our work is invested in exploring



how we can physically exist in two spaces simultaneously or expand from one another, all while maintaining a balance. The physicality in our work relates to a psychological space of inbetweenness, which addresses fluid nature of cultural identity we both experience as multi-racial individuals.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

The best advice we can give to other artists is stay motivated, keep working and continue to put yourself out there. You never know when an opportunity may arise. You can't stay holed up, alone in your studio, waiting for that big exhibition opportunity to fall in your lap. Align yourself with your fellow emerging artists; creating a community is imperative. The most important thing is to make work you love, not work you think others will like. The right audience for your work is there; don't sacrifice your interests for the sake of approval.

Sean Paul Gallegos

°(b. 1976, New Mexico)

I explore the boundaries of labels and definitions that create identity. The use of iconic imagery and sacred practice I transform discarded materials into objects of worship. The hybridization manifested from wearing my ancestry and juxtaposing ethnicities evokes an ancient spirit in the work. My narrative continues to question what we are worshiping and how we choose to spend or make our money.

Son of a Tiwa and Spanish horse jockey, Sean Paul Gallegos spent his early childhood migrating with the seasons. His Cree and French Canadian mother taught him the skills to survive winters in the mountains of Taos, NM and later on the shores of Michigan. His own dueling ethnicities inspire much of his work. Gallegos is excited to be part of the AIM 33 at Bronx Museum opening this June.

Q + A

Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: What is the most important thing about your process that you want people to know?

My process has evolved into a spiritual practice mostly comprised of silence, meditation, and out right prayers, all contrasted by a slight focus. The focus shifts from sacred and ancestral objects and their counterparts in our material culture to my curiosities with our prediluvian past. In some ways I am finding honor in our waste and sanctifying the discarded through transformation.



Rocio Aranda-Alvarado: In my opinion, there is no such thing as Latino Art, there are Latino artists who make art. But this remains a term that we have to deal with constantly. How can we reframe this idea (or boundary?) in an interesting or useful way?

To be latino is to be a mixture of humanity. A being with a foot in many worlds or the opportunity to do so. The label is the boundary. Without it we are limitless. But the confines from which society operates doesn't allow for unification, in fact it promotes just the opposite. What if there were no races and we were all just humans?

Raul Zamudio: Are there other things that inform your work besides art, and I mean this more so formally. Stated differently: if your medium of choice is painting, sculpture, photography, or performance, for example, is your work mostly informed by other painters, sculptors, photographers, and performance artists, or figuratively and respectively speaking outdoor billboards, trash heaps, mugshots, and Karaoke?

Art is a response used to create yet another ripple. The thought or the idea in any medium should create a reaction or emotion. This latest series showing concurrently at the Bronx Museum and El Museo is a response to my personal identity. The sum of all parts, the ones that get doubted and the ones that cast suspicion. The nose that doesn't fit my cheek bones or forehead, the lips and widows peak of the Bastians or my biological surname versus my adopted one. Even on the most basic level the materials i choose to work with are a response to my neighborhood opposed by almost 30 years of sewing experience. My everyday is in my work, my frustrations with the hood and the ability to be grateful for another man's trash. The actions of my everyday that are the cause or effect to my response is what informs my work.

Raul Zamudio: Do you think the title of this edition of La Bienal, which is Here Is Where We Jump, has resonance with any part of your work and if so how?

"the underlying moral of this fable has been understood that you should act and not talk, do rather than say, hence the title to the fable" Here Is Where We Jump There is a duality here for me. The gemini in me thinks about both the telling and how it is told.

You can be told or revealed the meaning in your own mind. Or you can have someone tell you. In one way this is why i am not a fan of artist statements or talking about my art. The pieces should speak for themselves and create their own dialogue. In some respects my feelings toward, about or even while i am making the pieces becomes irrelevant. If someone wants to dive into what my intentions were that's okay but i would hope they will have formed their own opinion, as i have formed mine. On the other side knowing the fable and the meaning upon which the title are based opens an alternative perspective. The



reveal makes it current and relatable; yet career oriented and artistically as well. In this digital reality we can freely post, complain, or rant and even i am guilty of this, but it is nice to be reminded to act instead of talk, tweet or post.

Raul Zamudio: What kind of advice you would give artists that are starting out?

Explore enough early on in life to know what makes you excited to be here. Realize and own when things don't work out and be open to more than one solution. Do the most good you can and work harder than you think possible. Without great risk there is no great reward.

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