

Outstanding events: Five Voices from Cuba in Berlin



On 16 September the House of Ergon in Berlin, Germany, unveiled its latest group show *Homeland in flight: Five Voices from Cuba* or *La patria que vuela*, coinciding with Berlin Art Week. The young gallery brings together five of today's most important female Cuban artists and presents new work alongside earlier pieces never seen before in Europe. The art on show collectively tackles concepts and questions of national identity, personal loss and belonging, homeland and migration, and ranges from photography, painting, video and installations to an extensive public performance taking place across the city centre of Berlin.

Artists Cirenaica Moreira, Aimée García, Lidzie Alvisa Jimenez, Sandra Ramos and Elizabet Cerviño represent several decades of artistic practice from Cuba and are important witnesses to a fascinating history, culture, society, and future of a nation. The exhibition is curated by Elvia Rosa Castro.

As one of Cuba's most important photographers of today, Cirenaica Moreira's work has been widely acclaimed for its capacity to transcend the political dimension and to create images that allow complex readings on many layers. Using everyday domestic costumes and props, and most often casting herself or her daughter, she creates dramatical narratives rather than single images. A survey of early as well as new work will be part of this group show.

Aimée García's work *Suprematist Conversation* or *Discurso suprematista* is an intricate collage of headlines from Cuba's newspapers, which the artist has laminated and then individually embroidered. She creates spaces of silence and meditation and invites the spectator to embark on an internal, individual journey, while the original news contents are preserved through shapes and colors. The work is accompanied by documentations of her performance piece *The Lady in Red* or *La dama de rojo* at this year's Biennale in Havana.

Lidzie Alvisa Jimenez presents two installations that receive their public debut in this show. The pieces take on the ideas of 'revolution' and 'moral,' concepts that are fundamental to the national psyche in Cuba. Her work speaks of a generation that dares to take on and scrutinize an iconic aesthetic of the past.

Sandra Ramos's work is highly autobiographical. An artistic encounter with the protagonist from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* runs through her work, and can be found in the engraving works as well as the video animation. Her artist book, entitled *Skies* or *Cielos* is dedicated to death and the eternal hope of mankind for the afterlife. There are references to Edgar Allan Poe's *Raven*, to Kafka, as well as to gospel music, but she ultimately refers to art, literature and human thought as ways to achieve transcendence and temporary immortality.

Elizabet Cerviño opened the exhibition with an extensive public performance piece taking place on the streets of Berlin and culminating at the center of political power in Germany. Using stones from the Cuban Sierra Maestra national conservation area where the revolution began in 1959, the artist passed through the Tiergarten via the canal, the Spree, the Reichstag and other locations. The public was invited to follow the artist on her path.

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