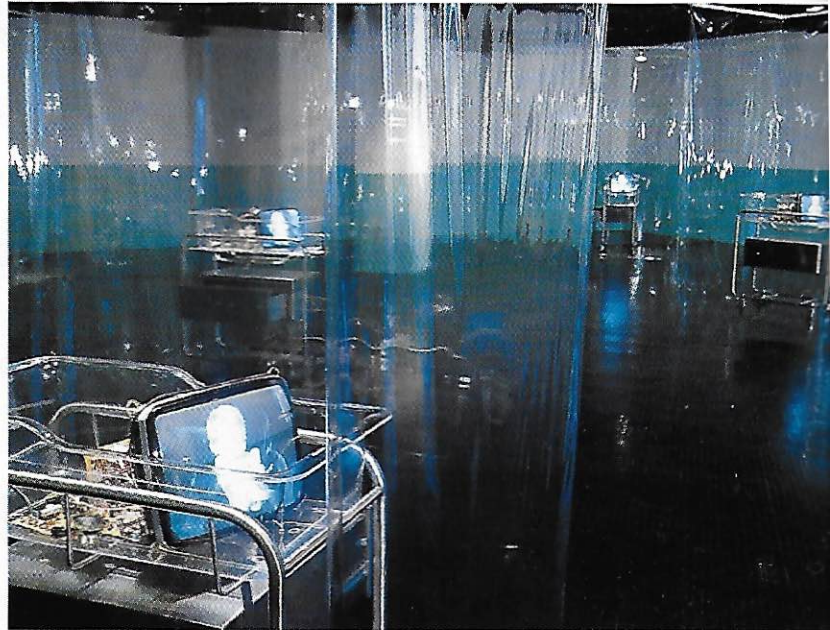


Above left, Purvis Young: *Untitled*, ca. 1989-99, mixed mediums, 32 by 47 inches. Photo courtesy Rubell Family Collection, Miami.

Above right, John Espinosa: *Cellulose P.72223.02*, 1999, Duratrans in light box, 6 by 8 feet. Photo courtesy Fredric Snitzer Gallery, Miami.

Near right, Antoni Miralda: *Lapato Gondola*, 1990, from his "Honeymoon" project (1986-92); installed at the Melin Building as part of the Miami Design District "Art in Public Places" program. Photo courtesy Dacra/Miami Design District.

Far right, view of Eugenia Vargas's installation *The Abject Body*, 1999, video monitors, plastic curtains, metal carts; at the Centre Gallery, Miami-Dade Community College, Wolfson Campus, Miami. Photo courtesy Miami-Dade Community College.



Far left, Barbara Neijna: *Rio Lerma* from her "Survival" photo series, 1998, Duraflex, 48 by 72 inches. Photo courtesy Ambrosino Gallery, Miami.

Near left, still from Robert Melee's 1996 film *Party Girl Mommy*. Photo courtesy Miami-Dade Community College.

REPORT FROM MIAMI: PART II

Miami Heats Up

Powerhouse collectors, exceptional city support for public sculpture and a strong Latin American presence shape the character of the Miami art community.

BY RONI FEINSTEIN

The first part of this article [A.i.A., May '99] explored Miami's transition from cultural backwater to active participant in the international contemporary-art scene, focusing on the city's numerous museums: the downtown Miami Art Museum (MAM), the Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) in North Miami, the Bass Art Museum in Miami Beach, the Lowe Art Museum of the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida International University's (FIU's) Art Museum, located on the school campus west of downtown Miami, and its newly acquired Wolfsonian (a museum devoted to international design of the period 1880-1940) in Miami Beach. Consonant with Greater Miami's dynamic growth over the last 15 years, most of these institutions are expanding, and because most of them focus on local and international contemporary art as well as Latin American art, there is considerable overlap and even competitiveness among them. Even the Wolfsonian has recently become involved with local artists (commissioning projects from Michelle Weinberg, Annie Wharton and Maria Gonzalez) to supplement museum exhibitions. The result of this mix of activities is a lively art scene.

This concluding section of the report will profile Miami's collectors, commercial galleries, nonprofit art spaces and public art. As in Part I, individual artists will be discussed in conjunction with the institutions, galleries or collections in which their work is displayed.



Above, exterior view of the Rubell Family Collection warehouse. Below, interior view showing Gilbert and George's *Finding God, 1982* (left) and David Salle's *The Cruelty of the Father, 1987*. Photos this page courtesy Rubell Family Collection, Miami.



Private Collection/ Public Function

In the early '90s, New York collectors Donald and Mera Rubell began dividing their time between New York and Miami Beach, after their son, Jason, settled in the area and opened a gallery devoted to contemporary art in Palm Beach and another later on Lincoln Road (both were short-lived). They bought office buildings in Miami and a few run-down hotels in South Beach, which they refurbished into boutique hotels. In 1994 they purchased a 40,000-square-foot, two-story warehouse (formerly a federal drug confiscation facility) to house and show part of their personal collection and that of their son. The collection includes more than 1,000 works—about 10 percent on display at any given time, in yearlong installations—and is currently open to the public Friday through Sunday and by appointment.

While "Hanging #3," the current installation, includes a few earlier works (Beuys's 1970 *Felt Suit* and a 1975 Andre floor piece), 1980 seems to be the decisive point of inauguration, with major pieces by Fischl, Clemente, Basquiat, Sherman, Prince, Bleckner and Koons, among others, dating to around that year. The collection also features works by Trockel, Hirst, Muñoz, Fritsch, Boltanski, Morimura, the Chapmans, Ruff (whose monumental Polaroid portraits of Don and Mera Rubell hang with the collection) and many others, and includes painting, sculpture, photography, film, video and installation works. Part of the new presentation is a room with 20 Haring drawings from 1989; a gallery devoted to contemporary German photographers (Struth, Demand, Gursky, Mucha, Richter and others); a room filled with figurative paintings by women artists (Kim Dingle, Cecily Brown, Adriana Varajão and Sue Williams); and a space in which to view six William Kentridge films. Among the installations in "Hanging #3" are Paul McCarthy's *Painter* (1995), which con-

sists of a stage set, props including giant tubes of paint and brushes and a video satirizing the painting process; Kara Walker's *Camptown Ladies* (1998), a cut-paper panorama parodying antebellum African-American stereotypes; and José Bedia's *Naufragios* (1996), in which an actual boat used to transport refugees from Cuba is surrounded by objects and images (such as deity figures painted on the wall) symbolizing hopes for safe passage.

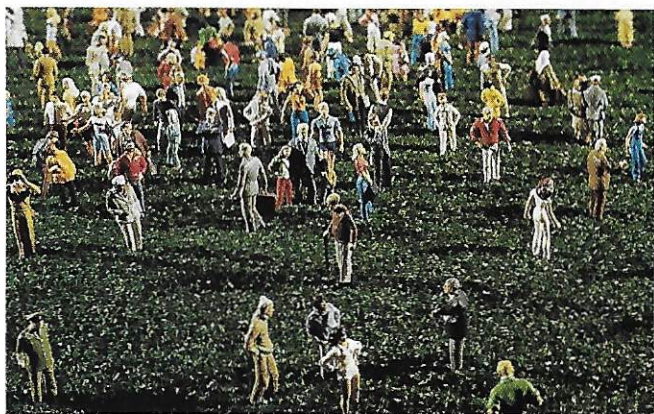
A relatively recent acquisition, *The Pursuit of Love* (1990) by Miami-based Pablo Cano, is not shown in this hanging, but is worthy of mention. It is an installation piece in the form of a marionette theater. The Rubells saw it exhibited and performed at MoCA in 1997. Gasoline cans, washtubs and other discarded materials, including hundreds of sheets of cigarette-package foil, are transformed into graceful (and radiant) marionettes.

Until a few months ago, with the exception of Bedia, Cano and the late Felix Gonzalez-Torres (who for a time made Miami his home), the only other Miami artist represented in the collection was Mark Handforth, the assemblagist mentioned in Part I of this article, who had at one time served as manager of the collection. Then, in January 1999, the Rubells purchased the work of Naomi Fisher and Norberto (Bert) Rodriguez from an exhibition at the Fredric Snitzer Gallery. In May they bought the contents of the studio of Purvis Young, a self-taught Miami-based artist who paints gritty, poetic images of life in Overtown, the black inner-city

neighborhood where he lives. Young's studio held about 10 years of work and included hundreds of pieces, many of them paintings on scraps of wood, cardboard, books or old doors. While this was not the first time the Rubells have purchased the work of a single artist in depth—they had previously bought multiple works by Haring, Condo, Koons, Salle and others—their new focus on Miami artists has begun to reverberate in South Florida and elsewhere. (Fredric Snitzer's first show devoted to the work of Young was held in August and September of this year.)

Amy Cappellazzo became director and chief curator of the collection in August 1998. The hiring of Cappellazzo was a happy one for the Miami art scene as a whole, given the pivotal role she had already played as both curator and educator (which will be discussed below); it seemed to be yet another indication of the Rubells' commitment to the Miami art community, which has grown in large part as a response to public interest in the collection. Miami

The 1,000-piece Rubell Family Collection, housed in a two-story former DEA warehouse, is often used for educational purposes by Miami students, artists, university faculty and museum staff members.



John Espinosa: A Crowd in a Field of Grass (detail), 1998, 175 HO-scale figurines, artificial grass, wooden cube, 5 by 5 by 5 feet. Photo courtesy ArtCenter/South Florida, Miami Beach.

students, artists, university faculty and museum staff members regularly use it as an educational resource; an international array of art dealers, artists and tourists visit with increasing frequency. As director of the collection, Cappellazzo oversaw the reinstallation and cocurated the collection show presented at the University of South Florida's Contemporary Art Museum in Tampa last summer. Among the public programs offered by the collection in 1999 have been lectures by cultural critic Ralph Rugoff and by artist Janine Antoni. Cappellazzo left at the end of May to pursue independent writing and curatorial projects (among them the New York Public Library's current exhibition on the artistic collaborations of the poet Robert Creeley and an essay for Cantz Verlag's forthcoming monograph on Antoni).

The Nonprofit Sector

Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC), located in the heart of downtown Miami, is a school of 126,000 students, 60 percent of whom are Hispanic. The college is a major force in the city's cultural life, annually hosting the Miami Book Fair, the Miami Film Festival and such visual and performing arts festivals as the "Cultura del Lobo" series, begun in 1990, whose mandate is "to present to Miami audiences the newest, most challenging contemporary and culturally specific work being created in the U.S. and abroad." The college's noncollecting galleries, which have recently been reduced from three to two, consistently manage to do just that, despite the fact that they operate on a shoestring and occupy wholly undistinguished quarters: small, cramped and low-ceilinged (one gallery is little more than a window-display space).

MDCC's reputation for showing cutting-edge art in Miami was established by the late Sheldon Lurie, who

gave many Cuban artists their first solo shows. He was followed by Cappellazzo, who directed the galleries from 1994 to '97 and presented some of the most adventurous and intelligent exhibitions to be seen in Miami. Among the many traveling shows she curated were "Two Cents: Works on Paper by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Poetry by Kevin Young" (October 1995) and "Passing" (February 1996), a thought-provoking video piece commissioned from the New York-based artist team Leone and Macdonald in which hundreds of Miamians (African-American, Hispanic, Jewish, Asian and other) talk about their experiences of passing for another race or nationality.

Because of the space limitations, in 1996 Cappellazzo arranged to present two exhibitions at the Bass Art Museum. "Real: Figurative Narratives in Contemporary African-American Art" (with works by Kerry James Marshall, Kara Walker, Philemona Williamson and others) opened in December of that year, and "Desert Clichés" (discussed in Part I of this article) was shown in April 1997. Cappellazzo taught classes at MDCC structured around work in the Rubell Family Collection. She also organized public lectures and symposia which were held in the collection galleries, such as one she moderated with José Bedia and writer, critic and performance artist Coco Fusco when Bedia's piece was installed. Cappellazzo left Miami to

become curator of exhibitions at the Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Greensboro. A little over a year later, she returned to Miami to assume directorship of the Rubell Family Collection.

Goran Tomcic, a Croatian poet and curator who came to Miami from New York, was named director of the MDCC galleries in June 1998. He expects to uphold the galleries' commitment to the international avant-garde. Tomcic will curate a retrospective of works on paper by Croatian poet-turned-artist Mangelos.

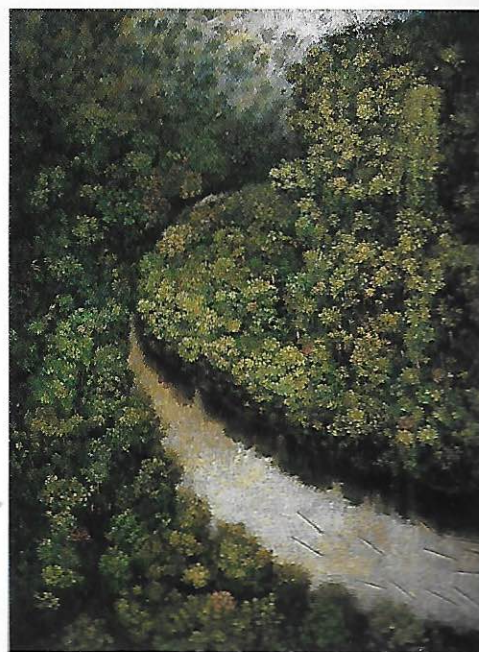
In January 1999, the MDCC galleries presented "Glexis Novoa: Te quiero. Te quiero. Te quiero.," in which a letter from Novoa's 80-year-old grandmother in Cuba was transcribed on the gallery wall in such a way as to suggest a distant landscape (the rows of script grew from small to large as they moved down the wall). Three facing display cases held the original letter as well as little altarlike assemblages. Another recent solo was "Eugenia Vargas: The Abject Body," organized by independent curator Tami Katz-Freiman, which presented an extreme contrast to Novoa's sentimental and engaging work. The grisly and disturbing installation by the Chilean-born, Mexico-based Vargas involved video monitors set into transparent hospital bassinets that displayed images of deformed babies reproduced from a late-19th-century Argentine medical book. Through digital video animation, Vargas "breathed life" into dead babies (e.g., a swollen belly rose and fell, a hole in a small head throbbled), forcing viewers to confront these tragedies.

While the galleries at MDCC maintain an international perspective, ArtCenter/South Florida largely focuses on Miami. A nonprofit organization founded

in 1984 to aid area artists, the ArtCenter leased 21 storefronts on what was then the derelict Lincoln Road to provide low-cost studio space for artists. Three large buildings were purchased to house shared equipment and workspaces (darkrooms, lithographic presses, etc.), as well as studios, classrooms and exhibition galleries. The gentrification of Lincoln Road followed. In 1998, the ArtCenter sold one of its buildings for more than \$4 million. The money will be used to renovate and expand its remaining properties and to fund programs.

The quality of the work produced at the ArtCenter is uneven, perhaps because many artists have been there from the beginning, when a quasi-open admissions policy held sway. Jane Gilbert, director from 1995 to '98, worked to raise standards for both artist members and exhibitions. Today some of Miami's more interesting artists, among them Robert Flynn, Annie Wharton, Nina Ferré, William Cordova, Karina Chechik and Jorge Pantoja, have studios at the ArtCenter, which serves as a gathering place for talented and ambitious young Miami artists. Gilbert's successor, Gary Knight, arrived in late September 1998 (after a long career in health-care management). He envisions the establishment of ArtCenter/Americas, which will attract artists from around the globe, each being selected by jury and coming for up to two years. This international center will function primarily as an educational institution providing low-cost studio space while helping young artists learn to promote their work, build their careers and support themselves by teaching (the ArtCenter offers various art classes).

Related to the ArtCenter's focus on education was the January '99 exhibition "The Art of Work, The Work of Art," which paired 15 ArtCenter artists with 15 nonartists (political analyst, plastic surgeon, accountant, social worker, etc.) to produce portraits of one another after becoming acquainted. "Departures/Arrivals," which opened in April, marked the new, more international focus. Five



Brooke Alfaro: Rio, 1995, acrylic on canvas, 40 by 30 inches. Photo courtesy Elite Fine Art, Coral Gables.



Ricardo Ríos 1999 *untitled 1999*
Angel Ricardo Ricardo Ríos: Untitled, 1999, charcoal and oil on canvas, 57½ by 57½ inches. Photo courtesy Freites-Revilla Gallery, Coral Gables.

Argentine artists who have studios there—Luciana Abait, Karina Chechik, Pablo Constrisciani, Daniel Fiorida and Carolina Sardi—explored the experiences of departing their country and arriving in South Florida. An evocative diptych by Chechik depicted railroad tracks receding into the distance while a ceiling with wires and beams grew larger in the foreground; inscribed on the panels were words of Jorge Luis Borges which translate as “he who moves away from his house has already returned.” The exhibition “Currently: ArtFocus 1, Summer 1999” featured the work of five young Miami artists who received the ArtCenter’s first visual-arts fellowships (\$1,000 and free studio space for two months). Selected by Tomcic and Katz-Freiman, the artists were Frank Benson, Luis Campos, Ximena Carrion, Leslie Merry and Wendy Wischer. Benson’s inscrutable narrative photographs and Wischer’s rubber suit in the shape of the artist’s body set beside a “breathing” tub of water (achieved via video projection) were of particular interest.

The Latin Gallery Scene

As explained in Part I, Miami has two distinct art scenes which rarely overlap, a conservative one devoted to Latin American art and another showing edgier international contemporary art. While this concept may seem confusing to outsiders, especially since the majority of artists rising to prominence in Miami as part of the international contemporary-art scene are Latin, in Miami the divisions are clear. Photography, video, installations and conceptual works are not seen at the Latin American galleries, which show work based in painting and sculpture and modernist or folk traditions. The Latin galleries tend to sell pricey works by established masters like Botero, Lam and Matta, while also representing a vast stable of artists from throughout the Americas (some of whom eventually relocate to Miami). The most prominent galleries occupy storefronts on upscale Ponce de Leon Boulevard in Coral Gables. Their clients, both corporate and private, come from across Latin America; they are drawn to Miami particularly in January, the time of both the Miami Art Fair, with its high concentration of Latin work, and the Latin

American Art Auction, organized by Coral Gables-based art dealer Gary Nader (the sixth annual event, last January, grossed about \$4 million).

Nader, who was born and raised in the Dominican Republic, moved to Miami in 1986 and opened a gallery devoted to Caribbean and Latin American art in Coconut Grove. In 1992, he relocated to Ponce de Leon Boulevard, where he now occupies two nearly adjacent storefronts. In 1993, he founded Gary Nader Editions, which publishes high-quality full-color catalogues of his gallery exhibitions (with introductions by leading critics) as well as his auction catalogues and the *Latin American Art Price Guide*, an annual listing of the year’s auction records for paintings, sculptures and works on paper by Latin artists.

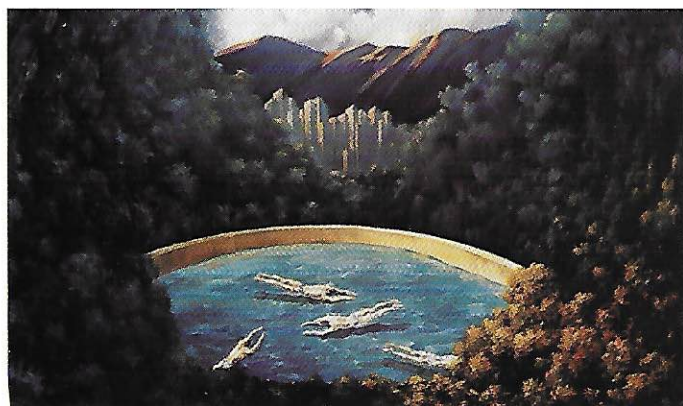
Solo shows at his gallery in recent years have been devoted to Botero, Lam, Matta, Armando Morales, Muñoz Vera, Agustín Fernández, Tony Capellan and Nicolás Leiva. In an April 1999 show, the inventive Cuban artist Manuel Mendive demonstrated the range of his production: paintings, collage paintings and canvases stitched to variously shaped iron frames, as well as bronze and iron sculptures and furniture (two large wooden chairs). Inspired by folk-art traditions and by the artist’s Yoruba (Afro-Cuban) religion, the work is imbued with a gentle spirit and sense of wonder.

Nader bills itself as the “Foremost Latin American Art Gallery,” and, indeed, the range of its activities assures that it occupies a central place in Greater Miami’s Latin art scene. Further, the quality of work shown tends to be extremely high. While the same cannot be said for all of the art spaces on Ponce, many galleries can be depended upon to show strong, interesting work. The Coral Gables branch of Bogotá’s Quintana Gallery has been in operation for more than four years. In April 1999 it presented a Botero exhibition together with a smaller show of masterful, tightly rendered still-life paintings of fruit and leaves by Colombian artist Hermann Camargo. Quintana has also exhibited work by Claudio Bravo, Alfredo Castañeda, Miguel Angel Ríos and Julio Galán.

Elite Fine Art recently featured dreamlike paintings in jewel colors by Guatemalan painter Elmar Rojas, followed by an exhibition of edgy, realistically detailed visionary paintings by Panamanian artist Brooke Alfaro (whose works stood out in the Bass Art Museum’s “Crosscurrents: Paintings from Panama” last winter). The lushly beautiful small-scale swimming-pool paintings of Colombian artist Pedro Ruiz were included in the “Little Jewels” exhibition held at The Americas Collection, another Ponce gallery, in April of this year. Liliana Golubinsky’s February exhibition consisted of extremely impressive romantic works in glowing colors, which seem to chronicle the futility of war. The Buenos Aires-

based artist overlaps loosely painted maps with soldiers and armies on horseback derived from medieval and other paintings; handwritten texts and arrows indicating paths of movement are superimposed. This fall the gallery offers a group show of Nicaraguan artists and solos for Armando Lara (Honduras) and Sebastian Spreng (Argentina).

The Freites-Revilla Gallery in Coral Gables has been in existence for three years; it is a branch of a Caracas gallery that has also had a branch in Boca Raton since 1989. Last April the Coral Gables space presented a strong show of large oil-and-charcoal drawings on canvas by Angel Ricardo Ricardo Ríos, a Cuban artist who has lived in Mexico City since 1991. The works in this first U.S. solo were suggestively physical, even muscular, versions of the artist’s sculptures, which combine architectural elements with soft pillow forms. The contrast between the bold graphic patterns and strong colors of the pillows’ fabrics and the blankness of the architectural elements is engaging, as is the interaction within each work between hard and soft, geometric and (seemingly) organic. In one of the rare overlappings in Miami’s two gallery scenes, Freites-Revilla this fall presented solo shows devoted to the work of Cuban-born Miami artists Ana Albertina Delgado (who formerly exhibited with the cutting-edge Ambrosino Gallery) and Rubén Torres Llorca (formerly with Snitzer). These exceptions are to be followed in winter and



Pedro Ruiz: Swimmers, 1995, oil on canvas, 31½ by 43½ inches. Private collection. Photo courtesy The Americas Collection, Coral Gables.



Manuel Mendive: Tigre con Garra (Tiger with Claw), 1999, oil on canvas, 47½ by 63 inches. Private collection. Photo courtesy Gary Nader Fine Art, Coral Gables.

Although the scene around them is small and insular, a first generation of artists raised in Miami's new cultural milieu is producing quality work that reflects contemporary issues and trends.

spring by a more typical lineup of work by Segundo Planes (a Cuban artist who lives in Monterrey, Mexico), Gaudi Esté (a Venezuelan who lives in Caracas) and Jorge Simes (an Argentine who lives in Chicago).

Pioneering Contemporary Art

Although the once-prominent Meza Fine Art was recently transformed into a restaurant and jazz club, Miami's Latin galleries tend to be more stable and profitable than those devoted to international contemporary art. Over the past several years, more than a dozen galleries showing cutting-edge work have opened and closed in rapid succession. Among them were Galerie Douyon, Barbara Scott, Gloria Luria, Bianca Lanza and Emilio Navarro. Nevertheless, a few have been in existence for 20 years or more and have played decisive roles in the Miami art world.

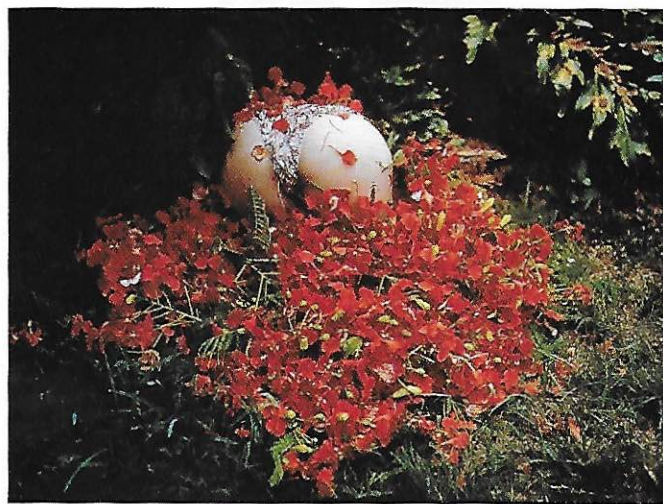
Just off Ponce de Leon Boulevard is the Artspace/Virginia Miller Gallery, which, since its founding in Miami 25 years ago, has shown both Latin and international avant-garde painting and sculpture. The gallery has presented work by Neel, Pousette-Dart and Karel Appel and continues to prefer painterly work. Last spring, solos were devoted to

the lushly painted Gothic fantasies of Texas artist Michael Roque Collins and to the powerful expressionist works of the Russian Maxim Kantor. In September the gallery presented a "Latin American Invitational."

Dorothy Blau Gallery is located on Kane Concourse, an upscale shopping street on Bay Harbor Islands, which in the early '80s had an active gallery scene. Blau, the lone survivor, has owned a series of variously named galleries on the street for more than 40 years. She has sold blue-chip contemporary art (e.g., Frankenthaler, Noland, Olitski, Nevelson, LeWitt and Haring) to three generations of Miamians.

Barbara Gillman Gallery celebrated its 20th anniversary in March 1999 with an exhibition of work by Christopher Janney (who lives and works outside Boston), Philip Smith (N.Y.), Robert Calvo (Portland, Ore.), Claudia de Monte and Ed McCowin (husband and wife, who live in both N.Y. and Miami), Peter Kuentzel (Miami), New Orleans jazz photographer Herman Leonard and many others. For its first 15 years, Gillman's gallery was a 3,000-square-foot space near the Miami Design District. (For a time she operated a branch in Tampa and co-owned a gallery in Boca Raton.) In the large Miami space, Gillman showed such famous names as Rauschenberg, Rosenquist, Warhol and Paik and also young emerging artists. A South Beach native, she was among the first dealers to exhibit and promote local talent with an eye toward helping the artists achieve wide recognition.

Gillman moved her gallery to Lincoln Road in 1992,



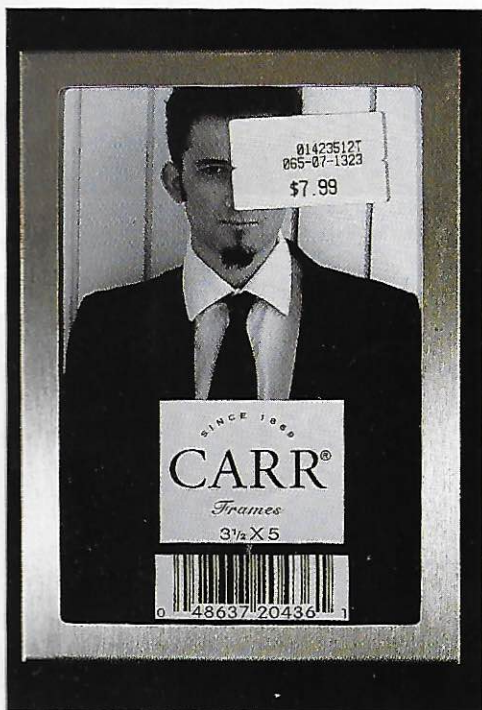
Naomi Fisher: *Assy Flora/Royal Poinciana, 1999, Cibachrome, 40 by 50 inches. Photo courtesy Fredric Snitzer Gallery.*

a time when the gentrification of what was to become South Beach's premiere upscale pedestrian mall and restaurant row was still in its infancy. In the early '90s, a dozen art spaces populated the district, owned and operated by Barbara Scott, Bianca Lanza, Jason Rubell and Fernando Gutierrez (the latter is now director of the Marlborough Gallery in Boca Raton) and others. In 1997, high rent drove Gillman to greatly reduce the gallery's size; this October she moved to another tiny space just off Lincoln Road. Today, except for Art Center/South Florida and Gillman's gallery, only the most commercial galleries survive in this area, such as the shop specializing in the colorful, highly accessible work of the Brazilian artist Brito.

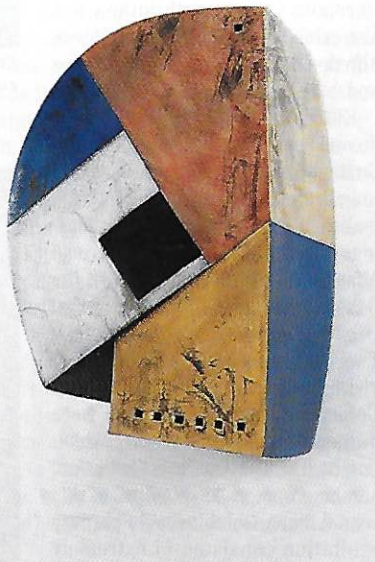
Promoting New Artists

Fredric Snitzer and Ambrosino galleries are the primary venues for new and provocative work. They are situated around the block from one another in a neighborhood of auto-body shops, garages and warehouses off Bird Road in Miami. Both moved from storefronts on Ponce de Leon Boulevard to industrial lofts in this rather gritty location about three years ago, in the process gaining larger, flexible spaces with higher ceilings and more of an experimental-art-space feel.

Snitzer, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1997, has long represented Carol K. Brown, Lynne Golob Gelfman and Sandy Winters, Anglo artists prominent on Miami's art scene since the '80s. (All also show in New York: Brown at Nohra Haime, Gelfman at Joyce Goldstein and Jacqueline Rothschild, and Winters at George Adams.) Until recently, however, the gallery was best known as a center for work by Cuban-born artists, among them Luis Cruz Azaceta, Luis Campos, José Bedia, Julio Antonio, María Martínez-Cañas, Consuelo Castañeda and Quisqueya Henríquez. Rafael Ferrer (who was born in Puerto Rico) and Roberto Juarez (who is of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage and lived in Miami in the '80s and most of the '90s) are also represented by the gallery. At one time, a good deal of the work shown was politically motivated. In 1991, for example, the gallery mounted an exhibition titled "They Would Rather Die," which featured eight rafts



Left, Norberto Rodriguez: #2 from his series "Buy an Inventory of Frames, Replace the Image and Return Them to the Store," 1998, black-and-white photo, brushed aluminum frame, 5 by 3 1/2 inches. Photo Fredric Snitzer Gallery. Right, Peter Kuentzel: *Interview, 1999, ceramic, 14 by 10 by 6 inches. Photo courtesy Barbara Gillman Gallery, Miami Beach.*



or balsas that had been used to escape Cuba, along with paintings of balseros by several Cuban-exile artists, among them Azaceta and Antonio.

Subsequently, much of the work shown has been formal or conceptual. Gelfman's abstract paintings are about paint, surface and an excavation of surface to arrive at a kind of meaning. Winters's late March '99 show featured cartoonlike, surrealistic machine forms made up of organic shapes drawn on a variety of surfaces, even within a single work.

However, Bedia's September 1998 exhibition "objetos de trueque (objects of trade)" carried a political message. He draws upon two primary sources: Palo Monte, a religion developed in Cuba by African slaves, which the artist himself practices, and Native American beliefs and rituals that he has experienced firsthand during numerous trips to reservations in the Dakotas and elsewhere. The exhibition's title refers to the blankets used by Native Americans for trade; several were used by Bedia as supports for felt

cutouts that illustrated the collision between the capitalist urge for power and progress (represented by a fighter plane, locomotive and cigar-smoking head in profile) and the adherence of native peoples to things of nature and spirit (ox, shooting star, bird in flight). A large, godlike figure drawn on the wall in black dominated the space. Delicate black chains extended from the figure to a huge, arrow-shaped water bird drawn on the floor in rust-colored powdered pigment, an echo of images drawn on the ground in Native American ceremonies. The whole was glorious and expansive, the god seeming to harness the power of the bird in flight. The exhibition traveled to George Adams Gallery in Manhattan.

Bedia, who has been represented by Snitzer since his arrival from Mexico City in 1993, is among Miami's most prominent artists. While his work has long been exhibited internationally (it was included in the Centre Georges Pompidou's "Magiciens de la Terre" in 1989) and was presented in a solo show at the ICA in Philadelphia in 1994, the past two years have witnessed a distinct rise in his international profile [see *A.i.A.*, July '97]. In June of this year, concurrent shows were held at Ramis Barquet and Annina Nosei galleries in New York; in July, a room-scale installation was shown at P.S. 1 as part of the exhibition "Animal.Anima.Animus." organized by the Porin Taidemuseo, Pori, Finland.

Homegrown Talents

Last year Snitzer added a few young Miami-based artists to his stable. This act not only represented a departure for his gallery but, in many ways, marked a turning point for the Miami art scene. In December 1998, the gallery presented the work of Naomi Fisher and Norberto (Bert) Rodriguez in a group exhibition titled "The Fashion Issue: Four Steps to a Younger Looking Skin"; in May 1999, "Fantastic Adventures," a solo show of work by John Espinosa, was presented. Today, the work of all three artists is ubiquitous in Miami.

In a series of large Cibachromes, Fisher extended Cindy Sherman's type of role-playing self-portraits, at once working closer to home (the South Florida landscape) and imbuing the images with a potent psychological, and autobiographical, aspect. Fisher photographed herself wearing a variety of skimpy outfits in a Florida mangrove forest. The positions of her limbs sometimes echo those of the trees, while in other images the roots and branches seem not only to pinion her but to pene-



Joshua Levine: What Came First (the product or the endorsement?) #7, 1998, Plexiglas and vinyl, 36 inches square. Photo courtesy Ambrosino Gallery.

trate her body. In one striking work, her skirt is pulled down, her buttocks milky white against the dark forest floor. A bouquet of scarlet hibiscus flowers extends from her cleft. The work is given a further edge—of sexual ambiguity, androgyny and a challenge to conventions of femininity—by the long hair on Fisher's unshaven legs. The photograph is extremely beautiful, suggesting a wood nymph at one with nature and natural processes (i.e., elimination) and something violent in the blood-red color of the flowers. In these and other works executed since Fisher's adolescence (she is now 23), figures are variously immersed or entangled in native palms, mangrove trees and other flora. A botanist's daughter, she explores once-avoided details of the body (body hair, acne, menstruation) and the self. The preoccupation of her highly personal work with organic forms and bodily identity recalls that of Louise Bourgeois.

Bert Rodriguez's work also relates to Sherman's role-playing self-portraits of the early '80s, and, like that of many young artists in Miami today, looks back to Conceptual and body art precedents of the late '60s and early '70s. To create the works in "The Fashion Issue" exhibition, Rodriguez went to Target (a discount store chain) and purchased a collection of picture frames. He replaced the photos that came with the frames, which generally depicted blond, blue-eyed "typical Americans," with photographs of his Latino self in a variety of guises: casual guy, classy dude, yuppie, etc. He then returned the frames to Target and photographed the shelves displaying the returned frames with his inserted images; these works and a group of nonreturned frames were shown at the gallery.

Likewise amusing and social-critical are Espinosa's color photographs from his "Fantastic Adventures" exhibition. The artist, who was raised in Orlando, donned a Spiderman costume and "invaded" Disneyland's Magic Kingdom (Spiderman is not a Disney character). A shot of Spiderman dramatically leaping and "poised for action" in front of Cinderella's fairy-tale castle represents the collision of two very different fantasy worlds: male versus female, perhaps, but, even more pointedly, cheap and shoddy comic-book/TV-cartoon images versus Disneyesque money, power and polish.



José Bedia: Hunting Views, 1998, wool blanket with felt cutouts, 62 by 77 inches. Photo courtesy Fredric Snitzer Gallery.



Roberto Juarez: Peaches Cloud, 1995, acrylic, peat moss, Japanese rice paper and charcoal on canvas, 48 by 64 inches. Photo courtesy Fredric Snitzer Gallery.



Charo Oquet's installation *The Kingdom of Our World, 1999, mixed mediums.*
Photo courtesy Ambrosino Gallery.

The Disney song "It's a Small World After All" provides an apt description of Miami's community of newly emergent artists and their supporters, one that is incestuous at its core. Fisher, Rodriguez and Espinosa, like many of the young artists now rising to prominence, attended the New World School of the Arts, Fisher for high school, the others for college. New World's high school, a magnet public school for the visual and performing arts, is, like the college, located on the downtown Miami campus of Miami-Dade Community College. Although Miami has a number of schools and universities with art programs (there are other arts-magnet high schools, and MFA programs are offered at the University of Miami, FIU and elsewhere), New World's programs seem to be generating a sense of community among artists, many of whom go on to exhibit their work in group shows at the ArtCenter/South Florida. As students, all are exposed to the collections in Miami's museums plus the Rubell Family Collection.

Both Fisher and Rodriguez work as caretakers at the Rubell Family Collection (she for 1½ years, he for three). Things became even more entangled when the Rubells purchased works by both from the Snitzer exhibition. Soon after, a few of these pieces were installed with the collection and included in an exhibition of work from the collection presented in Tampa last summer. In April 1999, Tomcic (director of the MDCC galleries) included the work of Fisher, Rodriguez and Espinosa in "Hot Spots," a traveling group show he helped curate for the Weatherspoon Art Gallery in North Carolina (his portion of the show also included work by Luis Gispert and Glexis Novoa). In May, Tomcic featured Fisher's photographs with Gispert's sound-producing sculptures (black-felt-covered suitcases, briefcases and platforms filled with auto accessories and/or stereo equipment that played loud hip-hop music) in a two-person exhibition at MDCC. It may be mentioned in this context that the photographic series Fisher showed at Snitzer sold out, with collectors from Miami, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and elsewhere purchasing the work. Cappellazzo, as director of the Rubell Family Collection and a former curator at the Weatherspoon, played an important part in Fisher's and Rodriguez's meteoric rise.

From 1996 to '98, Espinosa worked as head of exhibitions at ArtCenter/South Florida. In August

1997, his work, along with Rodriguez's, was featured in a show at the ArtCenter titled "Invasion of Privacy." A book version of Espinosa's *Wearing Other People's Clothes*, which appeared as a wall piece in the exhibition, was acquired by the Whitney Museum. The piece consists of 96 photographs of people from four angles (front, back, right side, left side) wearing their own clothes, alongside photos of Espinosa in the same four poses wearing the other people's clothes. The work was seen by May Castleberry, librarian and associate curator of special collections at the Whitney. Miami collector Richard Shack, who has since become chairman of the ArtCenter's board and who has been a member of the Whitney's Print Acquisition Committee since 1982, donated the book to the museum. This complex story is yet another illustration of Miami collectors fostering recognition of the Miami art scene.

The Gallery as Alternative Space

Ambrosino, Miami's other important gallery of cutting-edge work, is privately owned but functions like an alternative space: it is open to experiment and risk and committed to offering exposure to large numbers of artists. While the gallery exhibits the work of many Cuban-American artists (Glexis Novoa, Florencio Gelabert, Alejandro Aguilera, Arturo Cuenca, Juan Carlos Garcia-Lavin, Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons and others), its overall program is international. It represents numerous Israelis (Tsibi Geva, Hilla Lulu Lin, Zadok Ben-David and Nir Hod) as well as artists from Italy, South America, Miami and New York. Among the Florida-based Anglo artists shown are Nina Ferré, whose lyrical, graphlike drawings on paper and glass which purport to chart human relationships were shown last May; Barbara Neijna, whose photographs on the fragility of the earth's waters were exhibited in October; and Joanne Rosen, who will have a solo show in December featuring an installation and computer drawings of an ideal house. The gallery's September exhibition consisted of elaborate altarlike sculptures made of found objects and materials by Charo Oquet, a Dominican artist who lives in Miami. They are assembled around themes of celebration including religious holidays, beauty pageants, birthday parties and the *Quince*, the coming-out party of 15-year-old Latinas. A related performance consisted of, among other things, women decorating and serving cakes. Ambrosino's huge (10,000-square-foot) space often serves as a site for music, dance and art performances.

Genaro Ambrosino has directed this northern branch of his parents' Caracas gallery for eight years. He quickly branched out from Venezuelan art, first adding other Latin art and then nontraditional Latin art. The new agenda was signaled by such exhibitions as "Eroticism in Latin American Art" (December

1994), which consisted of photography, video and film. Shows of advanced work by Anglo artists followed. In May 1998, the gallery published *A.K.A.*, a hand-bound book in an edition of 75 made up of original prints, drawings and photographs by 22 Miami artists, from well-known ones like Robert Chambers and Neijna to young, emerging artists like Annie Wharton and William Cordova. The project offered these young artists greater exposure. Late this year, Ambrosino will start curating exhibitions of Miami-based artists for the Caracas gallery.

In October 1998, Ambrosino offered first solo shows to three young Miamians, Joshua Levine, Emilio Perez and Ralph Provisero. Levine and Perez were about to move to Manhattan, and the dealer thought they should receive local recognition and support. Although Levine was then a recent graduate of the MFA program at the University of Miami, he already had considerable exposure in Miami: self-promotion is a central concern of his "Art Super Star Productions"—as he titles his art-making and curatorial activities. The logo is A\$\$ (In keeping with the self-styled images of such art stars as Andy Warhol, Levine's close-cropped hair was recently dyed platinum with black spots, resembling a leopard's fur.) After attending New World's high school, Levine received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, then returned to Miami for graduate work. In August 1997, he curated "That's Life: A Group Show" featuring work by 28 young artists (five from New York, the rest from South Florida). It was held in a North Miami warehouse on the model of exhibitions organized in New York by Kenny Schacter (who was among the New Yorkers included).

In February 1998, Levine had a solo show at ArtCenter/South Florida, and, in August of that year, he curated the group exhibition "2 x 2" in the ArtCenter's largest gallery (in the building that has since been sold). Sponsored by Eagle Brands/Budweiser, the distributorship owned by art patrons and collectors Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz, the exhibition included work by Levine, Perez, Provisero, Espinosa, Gispert and Wharton. While some of the pieces were convincing and impressive, other seemed derivative or like the production of promising students. Robert Flynn's painting based on Watteau's *Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera*, Rachel Kaiser's large color photographs of adorable stuffed animals in sexually suggestive poses and William Cordova's wall filled with postcard-sized drawings were particularly successful.

Foul, Levine's installation at Ambrosino in the fall of 1998, was a tongue-in-cheek exploration of the chicken industry. Altered images of chicken farming downloaded from the Internet, collectively titled *What Came First (the product or the endorsement?)*, appeared on wall plaques, while rubber and plaster chickens in single-serving and party packs were displayed on a table or in cases. Provisero exhibited two quirky sound-producing kinetic sculptures, one of them offering random percussion sounds produced by spinning balls on rods striking piano innards. Perez presented a series of drawings on paper and board of a pile of rubble flattened against the picture plane; while recalling cartoonlike images of rubbish by Dubuffet and Guston, they were more elegantly rendered. (Both Perez and Provisero also attended New World.) Since arriving in New York a year ago, Levine has exhibited work at Exit Art, Postmasters and the Holland Tunnel Art Project in Brooklyn.

The Collectors

One of Greater Miami's major collectors of international contemporary art is Martin Z. Margulies. His collection surveys American art from the 1950s to the present, with the focus becoming increasingly international toward the present. It commences with works by Gorky, Rothko, de Kooning and Kline, moves through Rauschenberg, Johns and Twombly into Pop (Warhol, Wesselmann, Lichtenstein, Oldenburg, Segal), and then on to Minimalism (Stella, Marden, Judd, Andre), Arte Povera (Merz, Kounellis) and an array of styles, movements and modes of individual expression, including recent works by Korean Cody Choi, Japanese Taro Chiezo, Americans Rachel Lachowicz and Tony Oursler and Austrian Franz West. All of this work, together with much of Margulies's extensive holdings of large sculptures by Miró and Noguchi, is installed in his sprawling penthouse apartment at his most recent development project, the Grand Bay Residences on Key Biscayne. Margulies's outdoor sculpture collection, which resulted in part from an earlier development project (Grove Isle in Coconut Grove), is on long-term loan to the Art Museum at FIU.

While Margulies had occasionally bought photographs in the past, in the fall of 1997 he began to

form a major collection with an emphasis on contemporary work. He now holds approximately 300 images ranging from vintage prints by Dorothea Lange, Berenice Abbott and Brassai to recent work by Thomas Struth, Thomas Ruff, Andreas Gursky and Rineke Dijkstra, among many others. "Photography from the Martin Z. Margulies Collection," an exhibition of more than 100 works by 70 artists, was presented at the Art Museum at FIU in January 1999. At midyear, Margulies acquired a 15,000-square-foot warehouse where he will display his photography collection as well as installations and some paintings and sculptures. The building is just north of downtown Miami (not far from the Rubell Family Collection); Margulies plans to have this space, which he has dubbed "a passionate collector's folly," open to the public at set hours each week.

The collection of Irma and Norman Braman is also historically oriented, with certain artists' work acquired in depth: theirs is among the largest private collections anywhere of work by Alexander Calder and David Smith. The collection is particularly strong in sculpture and includes pieces by de Kooning, Miró, Chamberlain, Segal and Kienholz. With the exception of the Calders, the collection, which is distributed across their extensive bay-front property as well as in their home and an adjacent gallery wing, begins with the late '50s. It includes major works by Rothko and Kelly as well as Jasper Johns's *Diver* of 1962. It extends into the 1980s with paintings by Kiefer, Salle, Scully and others. Irma Braman's contribution to the Miami art scene goes beyond her collection: since November 1996 she has served as chairman of the board of trustees at MoCA and has been responsible for raising considerable sums to support museum shows and programs.

Collectors Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz have lent their support to several Miami art institutions, donating pieces from their collection, lending work to exhibitions and helping with museum purchases and exhibition expenses. Their support has extended beyond Florida's borders, as the de la Cruzes have provided aid for artists and travel expenses for curators and have helped museums mount and advertise shows nationally. While not exclusively devoted to Latin American art, their collection is arguably the most important grouping of Conceptual and neo-Conceptual art by Latin American artists to be found anywhere in the world. It is also the quintessential Miami collection, intermingling the work of internationally acclaimed contemporary artists with work by Miami-based artists (both Hispanic and Anglo). It has significantly

Metro-Dade Art in Public Places, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1998, has so far commissioned nearly 500 works by artists from the Miami region and across the country.

affected the careers of Miami artists while helping to shape and define the art scene.

Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz began collecting only a decade ago, initially buying works by such established Latin American artists as Lam, Matta and Tamayo. They educated themselves, reading extensively and taking classes, and soon their focus shifted to living Hispanic artists whose work was well-placed among the international avant-garde. By 1994, when the Lowe Art Museum mounted the exhibition "Latin American Art in Miami Collections," well over a dozen works came from the de la Cruz collection, among them major pieces by Gonzalez-Torres, Jaar, Juarez, Mendieta and Alfonzo.

The de la Cruz collection is installed in their bay-front Key Biscayne home as well as in a 5,000-square-foot poured-concrete addition, which was completed in the spring of 1997. The addition houses painting, sculpture, photography, film, video and permanent installations, and also allows for temporary installations. Today the collection includes works by an array of Hispanic artists—Guillermo Kuitca from Argentina, Jorge Pardo from L.A., Andres Serrano from New York, Gabriel Orozco from Mexico City, Doris Salcedo from Colombia, Juan Muñoz from Spain, and Jac Leirner, Rosangela Renno and Ernesto Neto from Brazil. Non-Hispanic artists include Richter, Polke, Cragg, Baldessari, Artschwager and Lorna Simpson. Central to the collection is the work of Miami-based artists, including more than 20 pieces by Bedia, whose work the de la Cruzes began to collect while the artist was still living in Mexico City. Other Miamians are Consuelo Castañeda, Quisqueya Henríquez (who moved to the Dominican Republic in 1998), María Martínez-Cañas, Rubén Torres Llorca and Mark Handforth, as well as César Trasobares and Teresita Fernández (both of whom have moved to New York recently).

The exposure offered to Miami artists by the de la Cruz collection has borne fruit. Patrick Murphy, director of the Philadelphia ICA, first saw the work of both Bedia and Fernández in the de la Cruz home and gave these artists solo shows. Lisa Kern of the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, first encountered the work of Fernández and Henríquez in "The Body Shop," a group exhibition sponsored by the de la Cruzes in 1996 and held in the Coral Gables warehouse that was later to house Snitzer Gallery, as well as in their home. Kern included both artists' work in the group show "X-Site" in 1997. Fernández, who currently has a residency at the American Academy in Rome, has been represented by Deitch Projects in New York since her solo show at the gallery in 1996. Fernández has also had one-person exhibitions at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and Masataka Hayakawa Gallery in Tokyo.



View of the Key Biscayne home of collectors Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz, showing works by (left to right) Carlos Alfonzo, Alfredo Jaar (on floor), José Bedia, José Antonio Hernández-Díez and Rubén Torres Llorca (on wall).



Teresita Fernández's *Untitled (Dressing Room)*, 1996, with two works by Doris Salcedo in background; at the de la Cruz residence.



Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt's Open Air Museum, 1990, portrait medallions on the Buick Building; part of the Miami Design District "Art in Public Places" program. Photo courtesy Dacra/Miami Design District.

Among the works by Fernández owned by Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz is *Untitled (Dressing Room)* of 1996, a freestanding all-white dressing room of the sort one might find in a retail store, except that it has opaque white curtains. The dressing-room mirror is at once reflective and transparent, raising issues of viewer-voyeur, of public-private, as well as of body image and awareness (the contrast between the purity of the white form and our bodies' imperfections). Another all-white piece, *Untitled (Crawlspace)* of 1997, installed in the de la Cruz dining room, consists of a narrow platform suspended a few feet from the ceiling, from which rope ladders hang down at each end. The work is magical, evoking associations ranging from diving board to circus trapeze to stairway to heaven.

Many other Miami collectors contribute to the local art scene, both through acquisitions and through participation on museum boards in Miami and elsewhere. Richard Shack, founder and chairman emeritus of MoCA is, as previously noted, a member of the Whitney's Print Committee and recently became chairman of the board of ArtCenter/South Florida. The collection amassed by Shack and his wife, Ruth, mingles international cutting-edge art (including a host of prints and multiples) with work by Miami-based artists, many of them young and emerging (Ferré, Flynn, Chechik and others). Several small objects in this collection take a house or "shack" form. Paul and Estelle Berg's collection mixes work by more established Miami artists (Neijna, Chambers, Handforth, Fernández) with confrontational work by Kiki Smith, Annette Lemieux, Magdalena Abakanowicz and others. Paul Berg is on the MoCA board, as is Dennis Scholl, who with his wife, Debra, has formed an extensive collection of contemporary photo-based work. Nedra Oren, who collects painting of the '80s and '90s, is president of the board at MAM. Also on that board is Ruth Sackner of the Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry, an internationally known collection of more than 60,000 pieces of word and image art.

Craig Robins, an honorary trustee of MoCA, served for several years as a member of the painting and sculpture acquisitions committee at the Whitney Museum; he is currently vice-chair of the advisory board of the Wolfsonian. Robins and his wife, Ivelin, collect Conceptual and neo-Conceptual art (Baldessari, Wegman, Simpson and others) as well as current Latin art (e.g., Alfonso, Bedia and Jac

Leirner). Robins's company, Dacra, was instrumental in redeveloping South Beach as well as in establishing the Espanola Way Art Center, which through the years has provided studio space for Juarez, Kenny Scharf, Miralda, Robert Miller and many others. Dacra has also been responsible for the recent redevelopment of the Miami Design District, an 18-block neighborhood which houses the South Florida showrooms of such leading interior furnishings companies as Knoll, Holly Hunt, the ICF Group and Waterworks.

In the spring of 1999, three public works of art were installed (at Robins's initiative) as part of the area's redevelopment program: *Living Units* (a modular kitchen and bedroom unit designed for actual use)

by New York artist Andrea Zittel; *Open Air Museum* (two large portrait medallions) by the Miami-based team of Roberto Behar and Rosario Marquardt; and *Zapato Gondola* (a monumental high-heeled shoe) by Miralda, who divides his time between Barcelona and Miami (his recent show at MAM was discussed in Part I). A bronze fountain by Scharf was added to this collection of public works in August. In September, the Design District and MoCA collaborated on an exhibition from the Rotterdam-based Atelier van Lieshout (organized by the USF Contemporary Art Museum in Tampa) dealing with the social concepts of design. The exhibition consisted primarily of large mobile units that visitors were invited to climb into or walk through, including a 40-foot-long fully equipped medical suite and a 20-foot pharmacy unit, which were on view at MoCA. The Gallery at the Miami Design District featured the mobile living unit *Tampa Skull* and other unique works.

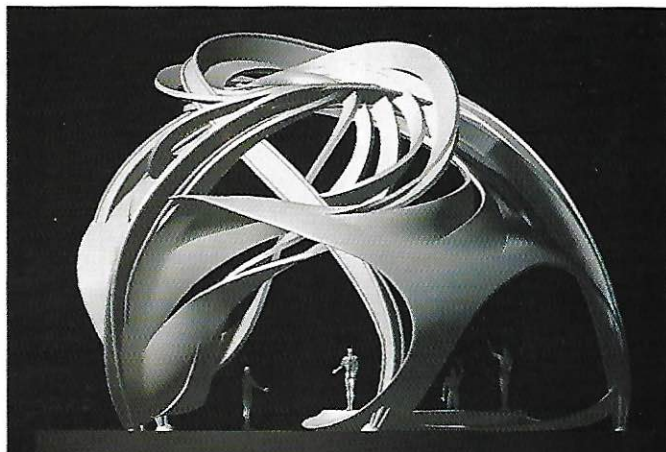
Art in the City

One of the most important patrons of the arts in Miami is the city itself. Metro-Dade Art in Public Places, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1998, is one of the nation's oldest and most ambitious public-art programs [see *A.Z.A.*, July '99]. By ordinance, since 1973, 1½ percent of county construction funds have been allocated for art works at sites of geographic and social significance such as libraries, parks, transit stations, government buildings, plazas and walkways. To date, nearly 500 art works, by artists from the region and across the country, have been selected or commissioned by an 11-person national advisory board of art professionals. The focus of the program has long been upon site-specific installations. Among the best known of the early (mid-'80s) projects carried out under the directorship of César Trasobares are Elyn Zimmerman's limestone *Keystone Island* at the North Dade Court Building, Ed Ruscha's mural *Words Without Thoughts Never*

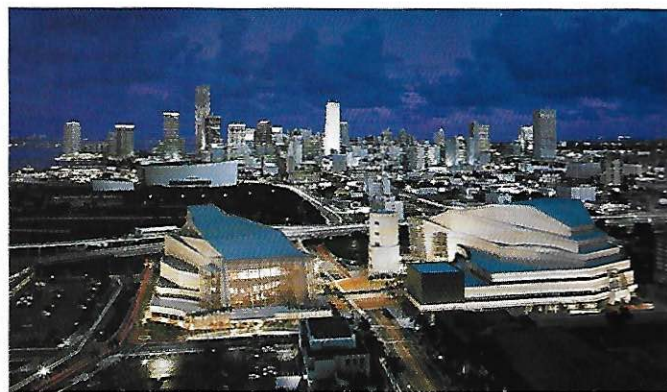
Frank Stella's bandshell for the new arena on the downtown bay front, his first realized architectural project, is a 34-foot-tall web of aluminum curves that, ironically, recalls a spiral-cut beach hat.

to *Heaven Go* at Miami-Dade Library next to MAM, Nam June Paik's video work *Miami* (currently in storage) for Miami International Airport, and Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen's *Dropped Bowl with Scattered Slices and Peels*, a large multielement sculpture which is in a shameful state of disrepair, especially so because it is located downstairs from the offices of Art in Public Places. (Ostensibly, the problem is the fountain's pools encouraging uninvited bathing and consequent liability issues.)

Directed since 1990 by Vivian Rodriguez, Art in Public Places is currently involved in three major projects: the continuing design and installation of art at Miami International Airport, the half-dozen recently assigned commissions for Miami's new \$225-million Performing Arts Center and Frank Stella's bandshell



Model for Frank Stella's bandshell at the American Airlines Arena; scheduled for completion December 1999. Photo courtesy Miami-Dade Art in Public Places.



A composite photo of the Miami skyline looking south, featuring inserted images of architect Cesar Pelli's future Performing Arts Center in foreground. Photo © 1999 Aker/Zvonkovic, Houston. Courtesy Performing Arts Center Foundation, Miami.

for the new American Airlines Arena. In the late '80s, Art in Public Places asked California environmental artist Robert Irwin to serve as master planner for airport art projects. Irwin proposed that artists be continuously involved in airport construction and rehabilitation and that their works be integrated into the surrounding architecture.

In June 1995 the airport's Concourse A opened with two art projects. Michele Oka Doner, a Miami-born artist who divides her time between Miami and New York, created *A Walk on the Beach*, a half-mile-long walkway featuring 2,000 unique cast-bronze elements embedded in a dark gray terrazzo matrix. The casts evoke saltwater plants and creatures that inhabit South Florida's shallow coastal waters, while mother-of-pearl flecks in the terrazzo suggest the seafoam at the water's edge. (Phase 2 of the project,



Phase 1 of Michele Oka Doner's *A Walk on the Beach* (detail), 1995, bronze, terrazzo and mother-of-pearl; Concourse A, Miami International Airport. Photo Nick Merrick © Hedrich Blessing.

which opened in the fall of 1999, consists largely of botanical images: subtropical flowers, seeds and leaves.) Connecting Concourse A to the main terminal is *Harmonic Runway* by artist/composer Christopher Janney, a 180-foot-long corridor lined with 132 10-foot-tall sheets of colored glass. As travelers move through the rainbow-colored light of the corridor, photoelectric cells trigger a score that includes sounds of crickets, frogs and birds (recorded in the Everglades) mixed with studio-produced harmonic tones in an ever-changing composition.

Since 1995, dozens of other site-specific works in a variety of mediums (ceramic, neon, photography) have been initiated by artists working in collaboration with architects. There are permanent pieces by Keith Sonnier, María Martínez-Cañas, Robert Huff, Martha Schwartz, Robert Calvo and Ed Carpenter. Projects by Juarez, Neijna and Michael Davis are in the works. While some of the installations are abstract, most make reference to the South Florida environment or to travel and aviation.

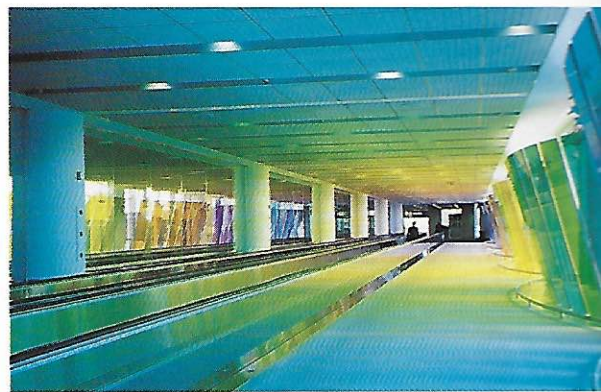
Miami's new Performing Arts Center, begun in May 1999 and scheduled for completion in 2002, is to be home to five resident companies: the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, the Miami City Ballet, the New World Symphony, the Florida Grand Opera and the Concert Association of Florida. From early in the design phase, Art in Public Places worked closely with Cesar Pelli and Associates to coordinate the inclusion of interior and exterior site-specific works. Among the commissioned works are murals by Miami artists Cundo Bermudez and Gary Moore and an opera-hall curtain by New York artist Robert Rahway Zakanitch. The San Francisco artist Anna Valentina Murch designed a bridge connecting the Symphony and Ballet/Opera halls across Biscayne Boulevard, a major thoroughfare. Swirling lines representing the musical staff transform a basic slab bridge into something dramatic and magical (especially at night, when it is illuminated).

José Bedia designed metal railings for the Symphony and Ballet/Opera lobbies as well as motifs for their floors. The railings seem to meld Bedia's linear stylizations and those of Miami Art Deco: sound waves (oscillating lines) emanating from musical instruments become ocean waves populated with fish, sea turtles, mermaids and cruise ships. In contrast to this joyous celebration is the mystery and romanticism of the two elongated, outstretched hands made of epoxy terrazzo outlined with zinc or brass strips that dominate the lobby floors. The Ballet/Opera Hall hand is set in a night sky surrounded by stars, comets and water birds; the Symphony Hall hand is set on a golden ground filled with fish and suns. Day and night they will beckon and embrace visitors.

Yet another project directed by Art in Public Places, slated for completion at the end of December, is a bandshell designed by Stella in Miami's downtown bay front, next to the new American Airlines Arena, home of the NBA franchise team, the Miami Heat. (A piece by Boston artist Ralph Helmick on the theme of flight is to be set in the arena's lobby.) A \$1.5-million commission, Stella's bandshell will be a soaring (34-foot-high) tangled web of a structure, with aluminum arches and curves that double back on themselves. The basic form has been employed by the artist in architectural projects for over a decade, first developed for a museum in Holland and then for an art gallery in Dresden. The form is borrowed from a beach hat—the kind that is made of rubber foam cut in a spiral. It seems both ironic and appropriate that Stella's first realized architectural commission should be in Miami, proper home of the hat. (An exhibition devoted to this and other large-scale projects of the 1990s, "Frank Stella at 2000: Changing the Rules," will be presented at MoCA, Dec. 19, 1999-Mar. 12, 2000.)

Looking Ahead

Today, Miami is witnessing the emergence of the first generation of young artists raised in its new cultural milieu, one in which high-level cutting-edge contemporary art is readily found in museum exhibitions as well as in private collections. These artists know contemporary trends and issues, and many are producing quality work. The art scene around them is small and insular: many of the artists are friends who attended the same schools and show their work in solo and group exhibitions at the same alternative



Christopher Janney's *Harmonic Runway*, 1995, glass panels, lighting, sound, computers; Concourse A, Miami International Airport. Photo Thomas Delbeck. Photos this page courtesy Miami-Dade Art in Public Places.

spaces and galleries, organized by the same handful of curators and dealers. While it is too soon to predict where this is going—whether a group or any of these artists will develop anything more than local reputations—the phenomenon bears watching.

Despite the promising developments in Miami over the last decade and a half, for artists the situation remains ambiguous. The question is: to leave or not to leave? Fernández, who succeeded in developing the beginnings of an international reputation while residing in Miami, chose to move to New York. Bedia has stayed. A recent series of photographs produced by Espinosa seems to metaphorically address the situation of young Miami artists today. In 13-by-20-inch close-up color photos, a little blue plastic fawn "visits" works by numerous well-known contemporary artists. He appears poised on works by Beverly Semmes, Mike Kelley, Donald Judd and Paul McCarthy, as well as in a corner of a washroom at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. In at least two images, the fawn is set against a fragment of the Bedia installation in the Rubell Family Collection. Espinosa thus pays homage to a Cuban-American artist who has attained some measure of star status in the international art world and who has chosen to make Miami his home. After completing this series of photographs in mid-1999, Espinosa left the city to attend the prestigious MFA program at Yale (along with Luis Gispert).

I believe these young artists will be tempted to return to Miami after the completion of their studies only if certain changes occur. Although Miami's arts infrastructure is today set firmly in place, it remains small. The same voices are continually heard in support of the city's art culture. For example, while there are six major art institutions, half are run by directors who also serve as the primary curator. These institutions need larger budgets so that they can expand not only their facilities but their professional staffs as well. The *Herald*, Miami's primary newspaper, has but a single writer assigned to generate arts reviews (the excellent Elisa Turner) and her status at the paper is only part time. The scene merits more extensive media/critical attention. In short, if the Miami art world is to continue to thrive and expand in influence and importance, it needs an influx of new people: curators, writers, dealers and others willing to take a chance on the city. More voices are needed to produce a viable cultural dialogue. □

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