

**PRESENT  
STANDARD**





CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF  
**DCASE**  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Cover Design: Cándida Alvarez,  
*A Man Waved*, 2004, Acrylic  
on wood panel, photo by Tom Van  
Eynde

*Present Standard* installation  
view, left to right: José Lerma,  
Dianna Frid, Harold Méndez, Juan  
Chavez, Mariano Chavez.

Photo by  
Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing

## Present Standard

On behalf of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), I wish to express my enthusiasm for this bilingual catalogue which documents through images and texts the complexity and richness of the work of 25 artists selected to participate in Present Standard. The exhibition runs concurrently with Pablo Helguera's "Librería Onceles" and "Carlos Rolón: I Tell You this Sincerely" opening on April 7, 2016.

These exhibitions coincide with the Spring of Latino Art (SOLA), an ancillary project of Latino Art Now! a biennial conference co-sponsored by the Inter-University Program for Latino Research headquartered at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Smithsonian Latino Center in April 2016.

I would like to thank Edra Soto and Josué Pelot for their work curating Present Standard, the five essayists, Stephanie Cristello, Alison Fraunhaur, Kristin Korolowicz, Teresa Silva and JGVWAR; Ed Marzewski and Lumpen for the design and production of this publication; and Greg Lunceford, Nathan Mason and Susan Friel in the department of Visual Arts at DCASE for their work on behalf of the exhibition and its related programming.

**DANIEL SCHULMAN**  
Director of Visual Art  
Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events

## Present Standard

En nombre de DCASE, me gustaría expresar nuestro entusiasmo por este catálogo bilingüe que documenta a través de imágenes y textos de la complejidad y la riqueza de la obra de veinticinco artistas seleccionados para participar en la presente Norma. La exposición, que se ejecuta al mismo tiempo que Pablo Helguera de "Librería Onceles" y "Carlos Rolón: Te lo digo sinceramente" apertura el 7 de abril de 2016.

Estas exposiciones coinciden con la primavera de Arte Latino (SOLA), un proyecto complementario de Arte Latino Ahora! una bienal co-conferencia patrocinada por el Programa Interuniversitario de Investigación Latina con sede en la Universidad de Illinois en Chicago y el Centro Latino Smithsonian en abril 2016.

Me gustaría dar las gracias a Edra Soto y Josué Pelot por su trabajo comisariado actual norma, los cinco ensayistas, Stephanie cristello, Alison Fraunhaur, Kristin Korolowicz, Teresa Silva, y JGVWAR; Ed Marzewski y Lumpen para el diseño y la producción de esta publicación; y Greg Lunceford, Nathan Mason y Susan Friel en la división de Artes Visuales en DCASE por su trabajo en nombre de la exposición y su programación relacionada.

**DANIEL SCHULMAN**  
Director de Artes Visuales  
Departamento de Asuntos Culturales y Eventos Especiales de Chicago

## Present Standard

Curated by Edra Soto & Josue Pellet  
 January 30–April 24, 2016  
 Chicago Cultural Center

**ARTISTS:**

Alberto Aguilar  
 Candida Alvarez  
 Luis Miguel Bendaña  
 Paola Cabal  
 Juan Angel Chavez  
 Mariano Chavez  
 Alejandro Figueredo Díaz-Perera  
 Dianna Frid  
 Diana Gabriel  
 Maria Gaspar  
 Melissa Leandro  
 José Lerma  
 Ivan Lozano  
 Jorge Lucero  
 Victoria Martinez  
 Harold Mendez  
 Sofia Moreno  
 Nora Nieves  
 Josue Pellet  
 Maddie Reyna  
 Luis Romero  
 Luis Sahagun  
 Chris Silva  
 Edra Soto  
 Rafael E. Vera

**CATALOGUE ESSAYS**  
**CONTRIBUTORS:**

Stephanie Cristello  
 Alison Fraunhar  
 Kristin Korolowicz  
 Teresa Silva  
 JGV.WAR

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**THE DECISION OF MOVE FROM ONE'S HOMELAND IS** never simple and immigrating, or any act of moving to a new country, can both produce moments of settling and endless questioning for the rest of an individual's life. Present Standard gathers a group of twenty-five contemporary, US-based Latino artists who are in one way or another identified as native, linguistic, or geographic immigrants. They are also artists with rich connections to Chicago who carry the impact of mainstream and cosmopolitan influences in their work that converses at a global level. Present Standard subsequently focuses on how these artists work within the centuries-old patriotic art tradition of flag-making to convey the wide range of experiences of moving in, out, and away—and their limitless tangents.

Present, meaning today or contemporary, Standard—meaning a pennant, measuring tactic, or guiding principle—queries the symbolic registers of flags as both intimate and personal reflections, and as the official embodiment of a nation. The artists gathered in this exhibition surely reflect the contemporary art world's growing interest in the idyllic and imagined symbolism of flag formats. At the same time, they interrogate the historic political, civic, corporate weight embedded within flags as bountiful sites to diverge from their conventional function and presentation, and to comment upon questions of place, identity, and nationhood. Through the filter of Latino immigrant artists' experiences, contemporary traditions of flag-making take on new bearings as they simultaneously homogenize and reveal the spectral range of interpreting migration, home, and patriotism in art.

Curated by Edra Soto  
and Josué Pellet

January 30–April 24, 2016  
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# Present Standard

A rich collection of five experts in Chicago's art and culture spheres has been invited to contribute descriptive essays of five artists with whom they share stylistic or conceptual commonalities. Critical writer, curator, and editor Stephanie Cristello explores the work of Candida Alvarez, Melissa Leandro, Nora Nieves, Luis Romero and Edra Soto, which gestures to modern and contemporary decorative arts and abstraction. Dr. Allison Fraunhar's work as a professor of Latin American art and cinema speaks well to the work of Alejandro Figueiredo Díaz-Perera, Diana Gabriel, Ivan LOZANO, Sofia Moreno, and Luis Sahagún, who variously interrogate body politics and the physicality in their work. The researcher and curator Kristin Korolowicz discusses the conceptual based works of Luis Miguel Bendaña, Jose Lerma, Victoria Martinez, Josue Pellet, and Maddie Reyna, whereas collaborators, researchers, and curators J. Gibran Villalobos and William A. Ruggiero (JGV/WAR) elaborate on Alberto Aguilar, Juan Angel Chavez, Maria Gaspar, Chris Silva, and Rafael E. Vera—artists whose work is impacted by collaborative and social practices. Finally, the curator and Director of Exhibitions & Residencies with the Chicago Artists Coalition Teresa Silva focuses on the interdisciplinary artists Paola Cabal, Mariano Chavez, Dianna Frid, Jorge Lucero and Harold Mendez.

Edra Soto (b. Puerto Rico, 1971) is a Chicago-based artist, educator, curator, and gallery director. She obtained her Master of Fine Arts degree at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2000, as well as attending Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2000), Beta-Local in Puerto Rico (2011), and the Robert Rauschenberg Residency Program in Captiva, Florida though a 3Arts Fellowship (2013), among others. With her husband Dan Sullivan, she designed and fabricated THE FRANKLIN, an outdoor project space that they co-direct. THE FRANKLIN has received support from various institutions, including the Propeller Fund. Soto has received a commission from the Chicago Transit Authority, and her GRAFT project will be featured at the Western Avenue stop on the train line to O'Hare Airport. Her work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Most recently, her work has been featured at the IV Trienal Polí/Gráfica de San Juan, Latinoamérica y el Caribe in Puerto Rico, the Elmhurst Art Museum in Illinois, The Luminary in St Louis, Three-walls, EXPO Chicago and Harold Washington's Pedestrian Project in Chicago. Soto will be having her first solo exhibition in New York at Cuchifritos Gallery and Project Space, curated by Albert Stabler. This exhibition will be traveling to Chicago to be presented at Sector 2337 in 2017. Soto is also a Lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**LA DECISIÓN DE ABANDONAR LA PATRIA PROPIA NUNCA** resulta sencilla, y el proceso de immigrar, o todo acto que suponga establecerse en un nuevo país, puede generar por el resto de la vida de una persona tanto momentos de arraigo como un incesante cuestionamiento. Present Standard reúne a un grupo de veinticinco artistas latinos contemporáneos radicados en los EE.UU. que de una u otra manera se identifican como inmigrantes nativos, lingüísticos o geográficos. Asimismo, se trata de artistas que poseen vínculos profundos con Chicago y que llevan el impacto de influencias mainstream y cosmopolitas en una obra que conversa a nivel global. Present Standard se centra ulteriormente en cómo estos artistas se emparcan en la centenaria tradición patriótica de la confección de banderas para transmitir la extensa gama de experiencias inherentes al acto de instalarse, mudarse y alejarse —así como su infinitud de tangentes.

Present, en su significado de actual o contemporáneo, Standard —que en inglés puede significar un estandarte, una táctica de mediación o un principio guía— indaga en los registros simbólicos de las banderas en tanto que reflexiones íntimas y personales, así como personificación oficial de una nación. Los artistas reunidos en esta exposición ciertamente reflejan el creciente interés del mundo artístico contemporáneo por el idílico e imaginado simbolismo de los formatos de bandera. Al mismo tiempo, interrogan el peso histórico que poseen las banderas en el ámbito político, cívico y corporativo como espacios profusos que permiten desviarse de su función y presentación convencionales y hacer un comentario sobre cuestiones de lugar, identidad y nación. Al ser filtradas por la

experiencia de artistas latinos inmigrantes, las tradiciones contemporáneas de confección de banderas adoptan nuevas facetas, ya que simultáneamente homogenizan y revelan el rango espectral de la interpretación artística de la migración, la patria y el patriotismo.

Se ha invitado a un sustitutivo grupo de cinco expertos involucrados en las esferas artísticas y culturales de Chicago a contribuir con ensayos descriptivos sobre cinco artistas con quienes comparten inquietudes estilísticas o conceptuales. La crítica, curadora y editora Stephanie Cristello explora la obra de Candida Alvarez, Melissa Leandro, Nora Nieves, Luis Romero y Edra Soto, que apunta hacia las artes decorativas modernas y contemporáneas y la abstracción. La labor de la Dra. Allison Fraunhar, catedrática de arte y cine latinoamericano, dialoga bien con las creaciones de Alejandro Figueiredo Díaz-Perera, Diana Gabriel, Ivan LOZANO, Sofia Moreno y Luis Sahagún, cuya obra interroga de distintas maneras las políticas del cuerpo y la fisicalidad. La investigadora y curadora Kristin Korolowicz analiza la obra de carácter conceptual de Luis Miguel Bendaña, José Lerma, Victoria Martinez, Josué Pellet y Maddie Reyna, mientras que los colaboradores, investigadores y curadores J. Gibran Villalobos y William A. Ruggiero (JGV/WAR) profundizan en los artistas Alberto Aguilar, Juan Angel Chavez, Maria Gaspar, Chris Silva y Rafael E. Vera —cuya obra se ve impactada por prácticas colaborativas y sociales. Por último, la curadora Teresa Silva, directora de Exposiciones y Residencias de la Chicago Artists Coalition, se centra en los artistas interdisciplinarios Paola Cabal, Mariano Chavez, Dianna Frid, Jorge Lucero y Harold Mendez.

Curaduría de Edra Soto  
y Josué Pellet

30 enero–24 abril 2016  
Chicago Cultural Center

# Present Standard

Josué Pellet (b. Aguadilla, Puerto Rico) currently resides in Chicago. He received his Masters of Fine Arts from Northwestern University and his Bachelors of Fine Arts from the University of Illinois in Chicago. He attended the prestigious residency Fundament Foundation in the Netherlands and has been awarded the Northwestern University Research Grant, a Puffin Foundation Grant and the Illinois Art Council Assistant Grant among others. Pellet has received attention through numerous exhibitions, including: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Museo de Arte de Caguas and Galería de la Universidad Católica in Puerto Rico; Chicago Cultural Center and the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago; Contemporary Art Society, London and Vane Contemporary in Newcastle, England among others. Most recently, his work was included in *The Heart of the Matter*, an exhibition curated by Jessica Cochran at The Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation. His interest in fostering an expansive practice engross his interest in collaboration and curatorial projects. He has collaborated with artists Josh Reames and Hector Arce-Espasas, and curated various projects at the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture in Chicago.

An essay for the exhibition *Present Standard* with artists Sofía Moreno, Iván Lozano, Diana P. Gabriel, Luis Sahagún, and Alejandro Figueiredo Díaz Pereda

## What's Latino About Latino Art Now? ¿Qué es lo Latino del Arte Latino de Ahora?

ALISON FRAUNHAR

**THE "PRESENT" IN "PRESENT STANDARD"** invokes the presentness of a diverse group of artists loosely linked by some relation to Latin America: place of birth, ancestry, heritage or residency. Beyond this generalized and arbitrary commonality, they share little else; not artistic practice, gender identification or sexuality, or place of origin. What unites them is the label "Latino/a"; it is the burden of representation they all bear. The label insists that whatever they do be read through a screen of "identity", that their work is somehow explained or reducible to the signifier "Latino/a". As artists, their practices are always/already linked to the notion of "representing" a particular place or essentialized worldview; while artists have long sought to disavow this obligation, for artists of certain distinct minority status, freedom from the imposed/embraced label has proved impossible. The inadequate and inescapable tag bedevils and feeds these artists in varying ways, forming their memories and informing their iconography, but also tying them to expectations and explanatory mechanisms.

For Sofía Moreno, a transgender Mexican-born artist living in Chicago, identity is the frontline of a battle waged on several fronts: against patriarchal Mexican gender norms; against the deeply ingrained class and racial prejudice against indigenous people and indigenous knowledge in Mexico; against even against her body and its implacable demands.

She wages war through her art, rage bubbling through burnt, ripped, dismembered and defaced drawings and objects, and demonic/shamanic performances. She owns, celebrates and despairs of identity and its burden of embodiment. Iván Lozano was raised in a city that no longer exists. Through decades of rising narco-cultura, the Guadalajara, Mexico in which he grew up, indeed the entire country, has been remade into a stage for the performance of pervasive and constantly escalating violence and fear. Those who lack the luck or the opportunity to escape have become inured to the spectacle of atrocities that mark the city and countryside. Lozano deploys the lexicon of Hannah Arendt's famous formulation of "the banality of evil" through the appropriation of images of violence from news media, literally re-inscribing media by reformulating filmstrips into unique artworks, forcing us to see the images that flood our vision every day. His strategy implicates the media in the production as well as the dissemination of the spectacle, and he snatches these images of violence from our benumbed pornographic spectatorship and forces us to acknowledge our complicity in their persistence.

If Lozano's work is underwritten by the loss of home, Diana P. Gabriel's work draws upon childhood memories of her home in Bogotá, Colombia by reconstituting affective fragments of memory: laying under the table and playing with

Alison Fraunhar, PhD is Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Design at Saint Xavier University in Chicago. She teaches courses in Art History and Film Studies, with an emphasis on Latin American art and cinema, and women in art and film. She has published extensively in these fields, and is presently completing a book manuscript on the representation and performance of race and gender in Cuba.

**EL "PRESENTE" EN PRESENT STANDARD ("Estándar presente")** invoca la actualidad de un diverso grupo de artistas relativamente vinculados por alguna relación con América Latina: lugar de nacimiento, ascendencia, herencia cultural o residencia. Más allá de esta coincidencia generalizada y arbitraria, es poco lo que comparten; no comparten práctica artística, identificación de género o sexualidad o lugar de origen. Lo que los une es la etiqueta "latino/a": es el fardo de la representación que todos deben cargar. La etiqueta insiste en que cualquier cosa que hagan debe ser leída a través de la pantalla de la "identidad", que su obra de alguna manera puede explicarse o reducirse al significante "latino/a". Como artistas, sus prácticas siempre/ya están vinculadas a la noción de la "representación" de un lugar particular o una visión del mundo esencializada. A pesar de que los artistas siempre han buscado negar esta obligación, para los artistas de cierto estatus minoritario distintivo, la libertad de la etiqueta impuesta/adoptada ha demostrado ser imposible. La inadecuada e inescapable etiqueta castiga y nutre a estos artistas de diversas maneras, formando sus memorias e informando su iconografía, pero también uniéndolos a expectativas y mecanismos explicativos.

Para Sofía Moreno, artista transgénero mexicana radicada en Chicago, la identidad es la primera línea de combate de una lucha en varios frentes: contra las patriarciales normas

de género mexicanas; contra el arraigado prejuicio de clase y de raza que sufren tanto los indígenas como el conocimiento indígena de México; e incluso contra su propio cuerpo y sus implacables exigencias. Sofía libra su guerra por medio de su arte, la rabia infándose en dibujos y objetos quemados, rasgados, desmembrados y desfigurados y por medio de presentaciones demoniacas/chamanísticas. Se apropiá, celebra y se exaspera con la identidad y con la carga de su personificación. Iván Lozano creció en una ciudad que ya no existe. A lo largo de décadas de creciente narco-cultura, la ciudad de Guadalajara, México, en la que él creció, de hecho, el país entero, se ha transformado para fines de la representación de la violencia y el miedo generalizados y en constante aumento. Las personas que no tienen la suerte o la oportunidad de poder escapar se han acostumbrado al espectáculo de atrocidades que marcan a la ciudad y al campo. Lozano emplea la famosa fórmula de Hannah Arendt de la "banalidad del mal" por medio de la apropiación de imágenes de violencia de los medios de comunicación, literalmente re-inscribiendo los medios al reformular secuencias en obras de arte únicas, obligándonos a ver las imágenes que inundan nuestra visión todos los días. Su estrategia involucra a los medios de comunicación tanto en la producción como en la disseminación del espectáculo y arranca esas imágenes de violencia de nuestra adormecida y pornográfica colaboración y nos obliga a reconocer nuestra complicidad y su persistencia.



Diana Gabriel, *Fleco*, 2015, Wood, staples, string. Photos: Edra Soto and courtesy of the artist



the fringe of the tablecloth crocheted by her grandmother and her aunts, watching the play of light and shadow through the geometric, tactile patterns. She recreates these phantasmal yet vivid memory-images in large scale, radiantly color filled installations that evoke the formalism of mid-century Latin American geometric abstraction and constructivism as much as they activate her childhood utopia. Working with string, thread yarn, her work further reinforces his connection to traditional women's arts by mirroring the materials of her grandmothers crocheting, but they dig deeper into South American history too, reminding us of the *khípi*, the Andean system knotted strings of different colors and materials whose configuration holds records of accounting and genealogy.

Raised in a working class immigrant family in Illinois, Luis Sahagún deploys an array of construction materials and detritus to rework personal and cultural histories in topographies of family, land, work and cultural heritage. He painstakingly constructs and deconstructs objects and images, building up and removing material in work that is rigorous, formal and personal. Working with common, devalued materials, Sahagún honors the drive to make meaning and beauty in one's environment, however limited the material resources at hand, as he saw his grandmother do.

While Sahagún's works are made from materials deriving from personal and familial history, Alejandro Figueiredo

Díaz-Pereda's work draws on collective as well as personal history—the act of making do, or *resolver*—negotiating daily life in Cuba. Díaz-Pereda left Cuba for Chicago a year and a half ago, and his homeland persists in his memory and his worldview as a vivid if ghostly afterimage. His work retraces the spaces, physical and psychic, where subjectivity and affect meet ideology and lack. Indeed, the particular “practice of everyday life” in Cuba is omnipresent in his projects, emerging in nuanced and subtle references.

All these artists share, in addition to the essentializing label Latino/a, a formal artistic vocabulary and formation that situates their work within the domain of contemporary art. They also draw on the embodied sense of self and location that can be construed as homesickness—the longing or desire for a place identified as home, as well as the sickness induced by the place identified as home.

Left to right:

Sofia Moreno, *Untitled I & II*, 2006, Mixed media on paper.  
Photo: Edra Soto

Ivan Lozano, *Narcomantas (Hanged Men II)*, 2015, Vinyl, packing tape, ink, copper, rope.  
Photo: Edra Soto



Si bien la obra de Lozano está marcada por la pérdida del hogar, la obra de Diana P. Gabriel echa mano de memorias infantiles de su natal Bogotá, Colombia, al reconstituir fragmentos afectivos de su memoria: acostada bajo la mesa jugando con el borde del mantel tejido por su abuela y sus tíos, presenciando el juego de luces y sombras a través de los patrones geométricos y táctiles. Gabriel recrea estas imágenes-recuerdos fantasmales y vívidos a la vez en instalaciones radiantes y coloridas a gran escala que evocan el formalismo latinoamericano de abstracción geométrica y el constructivismo de mediados de siglo a medida que estos activan la utopía de su infancia. Trabajando con hilos y madejas, su obra refuerza aún más la conexión a las artes femeninas tradicionales al reflexiar los materiales del tejido de sus abuelas, pero también se arraiga más en la historia de Sudamérica, recordándonos los quipos, el sistema andino de hilos anudados de diferentes colores y materiales cuya configuración contiene registros de contabilidad y genealogía.

Habiendo crecido en una familia inmigrante de extracción obrera en Illinois, Luis Sahagún emplea una gama de materiales de construcción y residuos para reconstruir historias personales y culturales en topografías de su familia, su tierra, su obra y su herencia cultural. Sahagún construye y deconstruye minuciosamente objetos y imágenes al acumular y eliminar material en una obra que es rigurosa, formal y

personal. Trabajando con materiales comunes y devaluados, Sahagún honra el impulso de encontrar significado y belleza en el entorno de cada persona, independientemente de lo limitado de los recursos a la mano, como lo pudo ver en el caso de su abuela.

Mientras que la obra de Sahagún está compuesta de materiales que se derivan de su historia personal y familiar, la obra de Alejandro Figueiredo Díaz Pereda se basa tanto en la historia colectiva como en la personal—el acto de *resolver*—de negociar la vida cotidiana en Cuba. Díaz Pereda salió de Cuba hacia Chicago hace un año y medio, y su patria persiste en su memoria y su visión del mundo como una imagen vivida aunque fantasmal. Su obra desanda los espacios, físicos y sicológicos, donde la subjetividad y el afecto se unen a la ideología y a la carencia. De hecho, la “práctica cotidiana” particular de Cuba aparece de manera omnipresente en sus proyectos, surgiendo en referencias matizadas y sutiles. Además de la esencialista etiqueta latino/a, todos estos artistas comparten un vocabulario artístico formal y una formación que sitúa su obra dentro del dominio del arte contemporáneo. También se basan en el sentido encarnado del yo y la locación que puede construirse como nostalgia: la añoranza o el deseo de poder identificar un lugar como su propio hogar, así como la enfermedad provocada por el lugar identificado como casa.

Traducido por  
José Ángel Navejas

Left to right:  
Alejandro Figueiredo Díaz-Pereda,  
*The Silence (...) is OVERRATED*,  
2014, 1926 Westinghouse fan  
motor, broomstick, microphone,  
speaker. Photo: Cara Megan  
Lewis

Luis Sahagún, *Conflicts of  
Desire*, 2014, Nail polish, lipstick,  
screws, acrylic, spray paint, oil on  
cardboard. Photo: Luis Sahagún

# Purposeful Pluralism

## Pluralismo Deliberado

TERESA SILVA

**IN POPULAR IMAGINATION,** the boundaries of "Latin America" and the definition of "Latino" are often generic and stereotypical to the point of being cringe worthy. Latin America is popularly perceived as a place "south of the border" and its people possess the same traits and speak one language. These perceptions could be further from the truth. Latin America has been a contact zone for a plurality of ethnicities, belief systems, languages, and lifestyles for centuries.

Contemporary Latin American art is no different. It also falls prey to institutional attitudes that artists, who are Latin American or of Latin American descent, will make art with certain visual attributes.

The purpose of the exhibition *Present Standard* is to sidestep expected clichés and archetypes of Latinx art. By using the term "Latinx" here forward, I am resisting the myth that being "Latin" is a monolith. Instead, "Latinx" thoughtfully encompasses the fluidity of cultural, gender, and racial expressions of a dynamic people. Curated by artist Edra Soto and Josue Pelot, *Present Standard* aims to challenge so-called norms by providing an alternative view with works by 25 Latinx artists living and working in the United States today.

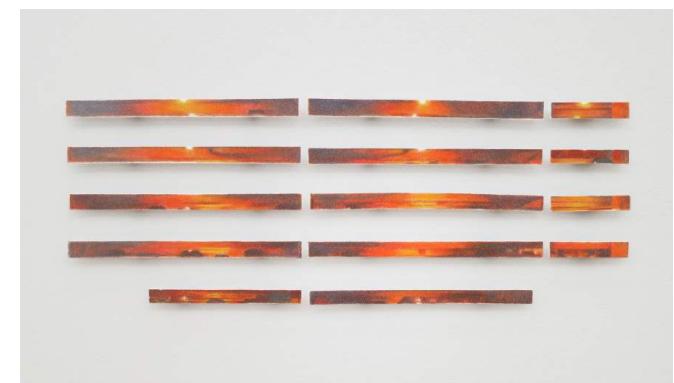
For this curatorial project, Soto and Pelot invited me to write about five exhibiting artists: Paola Cabal, Mariano Chavez, Dianna Frid, Jorge Lucero, and Harold Mendez, who, whether born in the United States or immigrated to this country, all straddle complex worlds of Latinx sensibilities and American values. Their experiences give rise to related but heterogeneous objects and subjectivities.

The title of the exhibition *Present Standard* is intended as a way to reclaim the word "standard." In English, "standard" implies an accepted norm, making something conventional or usual -- to standardize -- a process to which artists often feel allergic. By contrast, in Old French, "standard" or *estendre* means to extend or go beyond, which is a key goal of this exhibition: to use the exhibition format as a springboard to propel our critical thinking of contemporary Latinx art.

In the same vein, Jorge Lucero's quick drawing of a "flag" explores the concept of the word and object beyond its concrete or formal definition. Lucero's minimal drawing strips the flag of political, historical or national marker, making it a floating signifier that forgoes allegiance to a group and instead calls on an imagined global citizenry that is unsympathetic to any one ideology. Dianna Frid employs text, textiles, and graphite in her semiotic organization and repetition of the letter "A" (or pronounced as AH in Spanish) to connote a visual poem. The vertical lines, yellow color blocks, and letters build up a lyrical composition written in the artist's code. Frid's use of yellow denotes an activist subject, one who struggles against and cannot accept the conventional.

Harold Mendez's floor-based sculpture is a burnt cardboard box with a distorted reproduction of a copper Pre-Columbian death mask inside. It is an anachronistic time capsule laid open to reveal the specter of an elided culture. The artist's handiwork plays with the languages of image and object to reflect on violence and suppression inflicted long ago, but also to set out the prospect of redemption from subjugation.

An essay for the exhibition *Present Standard* with artists Paola Cabal, Mariano Chavez, Dianna Frid, Jorge Lucero, and Harold Mendez



valores estadounidenses. Sus experiencias dan lugar a objetos y subjetividades relacionados aunque heterogéneos.

El título de la exposición, *Present Standard*, tiene por objeto reclamar la palabra "standard". En inglés, "standard" implica una norma aceptada, hacer que algo sea convencional o habitual —estandarizar—, un proceso al que los artistas a menudo son alérgicos. Por contraste, en francés antiguo, "standard" o *estendre* significa ampliar o ir más allá, que es una meta clave de este proyecto: usar el formato de exposición como un resorte para impulsar nuestro pensamiento crítico sobre el arte latinx contemporáneo.

En una vena similar, el esbozo que hace Jorge Lucero de una bandera explora el concepto del mundo y del objeto más allá de su definición concreta o formal. El bosquejo mínimo de Lucero despoja a la bandera de todo indicador político, histórico o nacional, convirtiéndola en un significante flotante desprovisto de lealtad hacia un grupo. En su lugar, apela a una ciudadanía global imaginada que no simpatiza con ninguna ideología concreta.

Dianna Frid emplea texto, textiles y grafito en su organización y repetición semiótica de la letra "A" (en su fonética española) para connotar un poema visual. Las líneas verticales, bloques amarillos y letras arman una composición lírica a través del código de la artista. El uso que hace Frid del color amarillo denota a un sujeto activista, que lucha contra lo convencional y no puede aceptarlo.

La escultura de piso de Harold Mendez es una caja de cartón quemada con una reproducción en cobre distorsionada de una máscara de muerte Colombiana dentro de esta. Es una

Left to right:

Mariano Chavez, *Ghost*, 2015, Snake shed, paper, beeswax, form. Photo: Mariano Chavez

Paola Cabal, 3679, 2011, Chalk pastel on arches/rives on foam board spacers. Photo: Edra Soto

Mariano Chavez's Ghost is a celestial sculpture made primarily of snake shed. Its implicit silence makes space for an eerie contemplation about the relationship of the past and present, the permanent and ephemeral, the visible and invisible.

Paola Cabal's work on paper captures the visible but intangible: light. Using a parking garage on Lake Shore Drive as her subject, she apprehends the light and shadowplay that peer through the slits of the garage's architecture and make its design duly disappear.

Present Standard is a carefully crowdsourced exhibition making an important gesture: to purposefully underscore the pluralism that exists in contemporary art made by Latinx artists. It looks askance at uniformity and embraces difference. This curatorial stance to champion plurality and extend our thinking will rightfully open up new conversations and better artistic understanding.

Left to right:

**Dianna Frid, *Enjambment*, 2012-2013, Paper, paint, canvas, embroidery floss, graphite. Photo: Tom Van Eynde**

**Jorge Lucero, *estandard*, 2015, Small computer generated drawing of a flag on a white background in a white frame from IKEA. Photo: Jorge Lucero**



cápsula de tiempo abierta y anacrónica, con el propósito de revelar el espejo de una cultura omitida.

La obra de este artista juega con el lenguaje de imágenes y objetos para reflexionar en la violencia y supresión infligida hace mucho tiempo, pero también para establecer la perspectiva de redención del sometimiento.

**Ghost**, de Mariano Chavez, es una escultura celestial abrumadoramente compuesta de muda de piel de serpiente. Su forma corpórea y su silencio implícito crean el espacio para una reflexión enigmática sobre la visibilidad y la invisibilidad, y el poder de la muda de piel como un desprendimiento que lleva a la transformación y la trascendencia.

La obra sobre papel de Paola Cabal captura el tema visible aunque intangible de la luz. Usando un local de estacionamiento en Lake Shore Drive como sitio de pruebas, capta la luz y el juego de sombras que se filtran por las rendijas de la arquitectura del garaje, hasta hacer desaparecer el diseño de este.

Present Standard es una exposición que adopta un minucioso modelo de crowdsourcing para proponer un gesto importante: resaltar deliberadamente el pluralismo presente en el arte contemporáneo creado por artistas latínx. La exposición mira con suspicacia la homogeneidad y opta por abrazar la diferencia. Esta postura curatorial, que aboga por la pluralidad y nos impulsa a la reflexión, debería con toda justicia facilitar nuevas conversaciones y mejorar la apreciación visual por parte de un público más amplio.

Traducida por Susana Galilea

**Harold Mendez, *Untitled (Death mask)*, 2015, Burned cardboard box, soot, toner, oxidized copper reproduction of a pre-Columbian death mask from the Museo del Oro (Bogota, Colombia). Photo: Paul Hester**



## Soft Monument Monumento Blando

KRISTIN KOROLOWICZ



**A FLAG IS A DECLARATION**, a banner of ideological constructs. The traditional notion and function of a flag is similar to a monument in that it marks, and ostensibly commemorates, the vicars of a geographic territory. Within the territory of art, sculpture's modern art historical lineage moved away from the commemorative to a vast array of more social, temporal, performative, and generally expanded approaches leading up to the present. The works by this group of artists in *Present Standard* continue along this trajectory, often referencing the history of painting and incorporating "soft" materials as a means to make more palpable the deflated status of the monumental art object.

Reminiscent of the giant soft sculptures of Claes Oldenburg, artist José Lerma presents *Middle Class Flags* (2015), painted over-sized polo shirts inspired by private school uniforms worn in the middle class community of Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. These objects are displayed on bent flagpoles in the gallery. As a gesture, it represents a form of protest to

Lerma, who describes, "when you bend a straight line it gains volume so it becomes more three dimensional, commanding a larger area and behaving like a very conventional form of sculpture. And yet it also functions as a painting, since it has all the traditional elements of a painting." Lerma tactfully collapses the conventional distinctions between painting and sculpture, while referencing uniforms that allude to the confines of one's socioeconomic status.

Victoria Martinez's installation comprised of vibrant swaths of fabric, paint and found materials reference uniforms as well. Inspired by the customary embroidered blazers worn by Mexican Mariachis, Martinez's piece is a material investigation of the ornate designs and patterns of the musical performer's garments. This largely fiber-based work incorporates fragments of everyday materials such as pillowcases, balloons, and plastic tablecloths. Her choice of materials evokes the festive and celebratory nature of Mariachi performances, while employing a variety of techniques in this installation,

Kristin Korolowicz is a curator, researcher, and writer based in Chicago. Her upcoming projects include participating in a multi-faceted series of events and encounters between Chicago-based artists and creative communities in Salvador, Brazil at Museu da Arte da Bahia (MAB). Korolowicz has held positions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. As the Marjorie Susman Curatorial Fellow at the MCA, she co-curated Theaster Gates's first major solo exhibition in Chicago with chief curator Michael Darling, which was an

An essay for the exhibition *Present Standard* with artists Luis Miguel Bendaña, José Lerma, Victoria Martinez, Josue Pellot, and Maddie Reyna

Left to Right:  
*Victoria Martinez, Dolores, te sigo amando*, 2015, Mixed media.  
Photo: Edra Soto

*José Lerma, Banderas de la Clase Media*, 2015, Cotton, acrylic, steel, cement. Photo: Edra Soto



extension of the artist's *i2 Ballads for Huguenot House* produced for DOCUMENTA (13). Korolowicz also curated solo exhibitions of work by Gaylen Gerber and José Lerma, and worked with Darling on the thematic exhibitions *Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void*, 1949-1962 and *Think First, Shoot Later*. She received her BA in Art History from George Mason University, and holds an MA in Curatorial Practice from California College of the Arts. Current research interests include

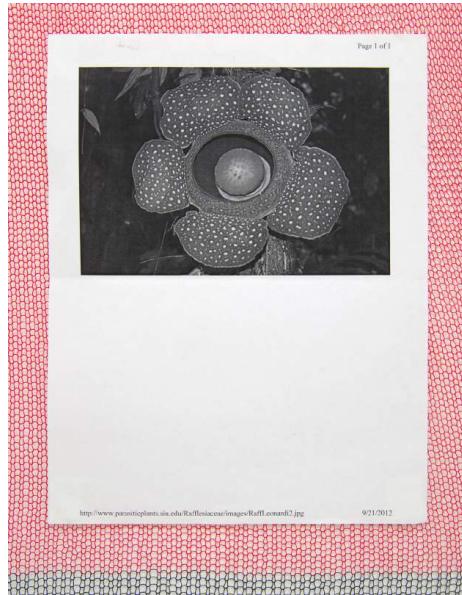
the practice of artists in the social field, context-responsive curatorial practice, and the potential of transnational networks formed by collaborative exchanges between independent artist initiatives.

**UNA BANDERA ES UNA DECLARACIÓN**, un estandarte de postulados ideológicos. La noción y función tradicional de una bandera es similar a la de un monumento puesto que señala, y presumiblemente commora, a los que han conquistado un territorio geográfico. Dentro del territorio del arte, el linaje histórico de la escultura en el arte moderno ha venido cambiando la commemoración por un acercamiento a enfoques más sociales, temporales, performativos y generalmente amplios. Las obras de este grupo de artistas en *Present Standard* marcan una continuación de esta trayectoria, haciendo referencia con frecuencia a la historia de la pintura e incorporando materiales "blandos" como medio para hacer más palpable el estado desinfulado del objeto de arte monumental.,

El artista José Lerma evoca las esculturales blandas gigantes de Claes Oldenburg cuando presenta *Middle Class Flags* (*Banderas de la clase media*) (2015), polos gigantes inspirados en los uniformes de colegios privados que se estilan en la comunidad de clase media de Guaynabo, Puerto Rico.

Estos objetos se exhiben en la galería sobre astas dobladas. El gesto representa una forma de protesta por parte de Lerma, quien describe, "cuando doblas una línea recta, adquiere volumen, de forma que se torna más tridimensional y exige una mayor área, comportándose como una forma muy convencional de la escultura. Y sin embargo, también funciona como pintura, ya que cuenta con todos los elementos tradicionales de la pintura". Lerma desaparece con mucha tacto las distinciones convencionales entre la pintura y la escultura, mientras hace referencia a uniformes que aluden a los confines de la propia condición socioeconómica.

La pintura, los materiales encontrados y los retazos coloridos de la instalación de Victoria Martínez también hacen referencia a los uniformes. Inspirada por las chaquetas bordadas que acostumbran a usar los mariachis mexicanos, la pieza de Martínez es una investigación de los diseños y estampados ornamentales de las prendas de vestir de estos intérpretes musicales. Este trabajo textil incorpora fragmentos



from collaging and sewing, to painting and screen-printing. Likewise, the concept of improvisation or the attitude of "making-do" is a prominent motif in her practice.

Luis Miguel Bendaña's *Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)* (2015) is a vertically-oriented, pink and gray polyester weaving with a black and white Xerox print that nearly hovers over its surface. The Xerox print depicts a beautiful rafflesia flower, a rare, parasitic, rootless plant, which is best known for its putrid smell often compared to the malodorous stench of decomposing meat. Although a pleasant composition at first glance, the work's title references not only the monster-like flower, but also the Sandinistas—the political party who overthrew Nicaragua's Somoza dictatorship of the 60s and 70s, and governed the country from 1979 to 1990. Bendaña's choice to knit the polyester threads into a grid formation and use polyurethane to prevent the fabric from unraveling, creates a purposefully stiff surface. Reflecting on the precarious political situation of his country, the artist explains, "the work almost exists in a state of frozen anxiety." *Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)* asks us to consider the vulnerability of the object, its knotted past, and perhaps the ideological constructs it embodies.

Maddie Reyna's painting *From Gayle* (2014) comprised of enamel and ink on foamcore with inkjet print, recalls an overtly precious-looking plaque. This piece is part of a series of works by the artist that commemorate her email conversations with strangers on Ebay, where she sells fashion

accessories. Reyna collects these correspondences and uses them as source material for her paintings. Functioning as a rejoinder of sorts to the assumed masculine heroism of a conventional history plaque, *From Gayle* becomes a type of ironically saccharine commentary.

Josue Pelot's *Untitled* (2012) are acrylic on wood diptychs. They are two sculptural paintings that appear to be formal inversions of sunbursts. Although an abstract signifier, the sun reference and color palette are derived from advertising campaigns of Puerto Rico's popular soft drink, Malta. Pelot's interest in the color gradient in this work is a quotation of 40s and 50s color field painters. But rather than the monumental canvases of color field paintings, Pelot creates a diptych that is decidedly diminutive in scale.

Despite their diverse approaches and interests, what unites these artists is an engagement with the traditions of soft sculpture and expanded painting practice. Here, the flag is a soft monument that is both metaphorically and literally constructed and deconstructed, stretched and unstretched.

Luis Miguel Bendaña, *Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)*, 2015, Custom machine knit polyester, polyurethane, Xerox print. Photo: Luis Miguel Bendaña

Maddie Reyna, *From Gayle*, 2014, Mixed media. Photo: Maddie Reyna



Traducido por Moira Pujols  
 Josue Pelot, *Untitled*, 2012, Latex enamel on wood. Photo: Studio 408

de materiales de uso cotidiano, tales como fundas de almohada, globos y manteles de plástico. Su elección de materiales evoca el carácter festivo y celebratorio de los espectáculos de Mariachi, al tiempo que emplea una variedad de técnicas en la instalación, desde el collage y la costura, hasta la pintura y serigrafía. Del mismo modo, el concepto de improvisación o el "resolver como se pueda" es una idea central en su práctica.

*Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)* (Flor podrida), de Luis Miguel Bendaña (2015), es un tejido vertical de poliéster gris y rosa, con una copia Xerox en blanco y negro suspendida sobre su superficie. La copia representa una hermosa rafflesia, una planta parásita sin raíces muy poco común, más conocida por su olor putrido, que recuerda a menudo el hedor de carne descompuesta. Aunque la composición es agradable a primera vista, el título de la obra no sólo nos remite a la monstruosa flor sino también a los sandinistas, el partido político que derrocó la dictadura de Somoza de los años 60 y 70 en Nicaragua, y que dirigió el país de 1979 a 1990. Bendaña teje los hilos de poliéster en forma de cuadrícula, y el uso de poliuretano para evitar que el tejido se deshilache, crea una superficie intencionalmente rígida. Al reflexionar sobre la precaria situación política de su país, explica el artista, "la obra existe casi en un estado de ansiedad congelado. *Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)* nos pide que tomemos en cuenta la vulnerabilidad del objeto, el complicado pasado, y tal vez los postulados ideológicos que encarna.

La pintura *From Gayle* (2014) de Maddie Reyna, en esmalte y tinta sobre cartón pluma impreso por inyección de tinta, nos recuerda una placa abiertamente cursi. Esta pieza forma parte de una serie de obras de la artista basadas en sus conversaciones de correo electrónico con extraños en Ebay, donde vende accesorios de moda. Reyna recoge estas correspondencias y las utiliza como material para sus pinturas. *From Gayle* funciona en cierta forma como respuesta al heroísmo presumiblemente masculino de las placas históricas tradicionales, y se convierte en un tipo de comentario irónicamente empalagoso.

Untitled (Sin título) (2012) de Josué Pelot, son dípticos de acrílico sobre madera. Se trata de dos pinturas escultóricas que parecen ser inversiones formales de destellos de sol. Aunque es un significante abstracto, la referencia al sol y la paleta de colores se derivan de las campañas publicitarias bebida de soda popular, Malta de Puerto Rico El Sol. El abanico de color de Pelot imita a las pinturas de campos de color de los años 40 y 50, pero en lugar de los lienzos monumentales de aquellas pinturas, Pelot crea un díptico que es decididamente diminuto en escala.

A pesar de sus diversos enfoques e intereses, lo que une a estos artistas es un compromiso con las tradiciones de escultura blanda y la práctica ampliada de la pintura. En este caso, la bandera es un monumento blando que es metafórico, y literalmente construido y deconstruido, estirado y encogido.

An essay for the exhibition *Present Standard* with artists Candida Alvarez, Melissa Leandro, Nora Nieves, Luis Romero, and Edra Soto

## Here and Now: Navigating the Present Standard Aquí y Ahora: Sondeando el Present Standard

STEPHANIE CRISTELLO

**AS A TENSE, THE PRESENT STANDARD REFERENCES A** measure of time—a glimpse into the current moment. Beyond a sense of currency to the works included in this exhibition, an approach to all-over pattern unites these five artists, whose works span painting, weaving, sculpture, and readymade forms to challenge the relationship between material processes and visual output. As a form, pattern is also a type of model through which to see the world, a type of rhythm that can take on disparate subjects and influences, and combine them in a way that is fresh and engaging. Few artists combine this as consistently in their practice as Candida Alvarez, whose paintings are constantly rethinking, digressing from, and problematizing the relationship between figure and ground, ground and figure.

Alvarez's process is not one that follows intuition, but fights instinct. There is an essential difference in this approach, especially with regards to abstraction; one gets the sense that Alvarez is not necessarily indulging in the marks

that make up the painting, but is rather fighting against them. Their harmony and structure is born through (or despite of) this method, where each painting weaves within its surface its own narrative and sense of space—a type of mapping that makes complex geographies out of flatness, contained within a single plane. Alvarez describes these paintings as windows, not in a pre-modern way, but as a literal framework, confounding her upbringing in the projects in the Bronx with an experience of always looking outside, imagining different worlds through the frame of the building's architecture.

In describing the work in her studio, Alvarez gestured toward one of her paintings as an intersection between Franz Kafka and Merce Cunningham; another as Allen Ginsberg meets Wonder Woman. Indeed, the paintings have a sense of combining these literary references—if not through text, then through a narrative inclination or “reading” of the composition—and the more immediate effects of pop culture on her palette. The painting from 2004 that is included in *Present Standard* is reminiscent of camouflage, where the subject of

Stephanie Cristello (Canadian b. 1991) is a critic and curator living and working in Chicago, IL. She is the Senior Editor US for ArtSlant, and is the Editor-in-Chief for THE SEEN, Chicago's International Journal of Contemporary & Modern Art. Her writing has been published in ArtReview, BOMB Magazine, and New American Paintings among other outlets, as well as numerous exhibition catalogues nationally and internationally including the ESSL Museum in Vienna, and Light Work Residency in New York. She graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with a BFA and Liberal Arts Thesis. Past curatorial

Candida Alvarez, *A Man Waved*, 2004, Acrylic on wood panel, photo by Tom Van Eynde



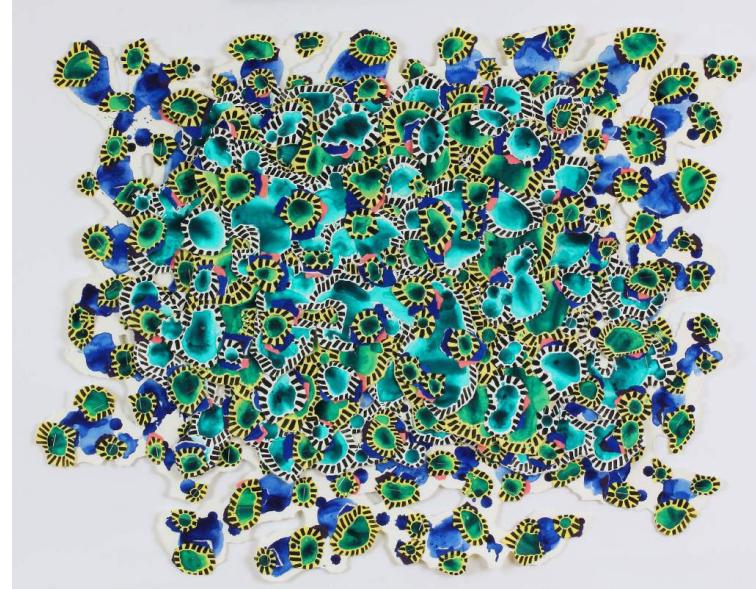
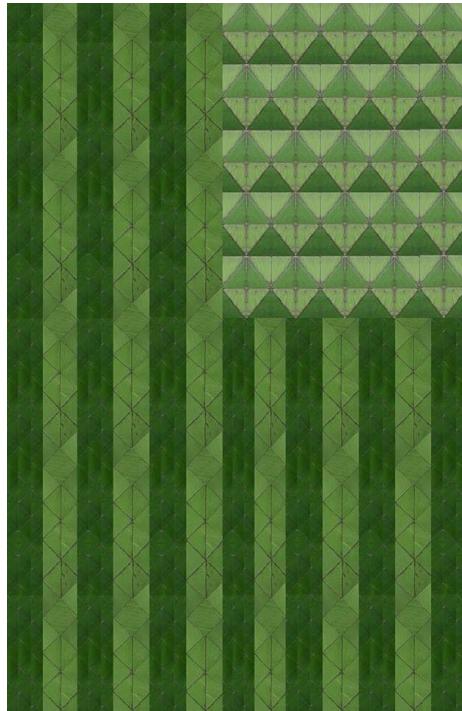
exhibitions include Sub-Scheme at Western Exhibitions, Fractal Semblance at Roots & Culture, and the organizing of the French-American Curatorial Exchange presented in partnership with EXPO CHICAGO and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, which resulted in a multi-venue presentation of Daniel Buren's work, as well as a panel discussion as part of / Dialogues, in September of 2015. She is currently the Director of Programming at EXPO CHICAGO, the International Exposition of Contemporary & Modern Art.

**COMO TIEMPO VERBAL, EL PRESENT STANDARD HACE** referencia a una medida de tiempo—un vistazo al momento actual. Más allá del sentido de vigencia que caracteriza a las obras incluidas en esta exposición, un enfoque en la ubicuidad de los patrones une a estos cinco artistas, cuyas obras abarcan la pintura, el tejido, la escultura y las formas readymade para desafiar la relación entre los procesos materiales y el resultado visual. En tanto que forma, el patrón es también un tipo de modelo a través del cual ver el mundo, un tipo de ritmo que puede asumir sujetos e influencias dispares, y combinarlos de modo que resulte original y atractivo. Pocos artistas combinan estos factores en su práctica de manera tan sistemática como Candida Alvarez, cuyas pinturas formula una reconsideración, digresión y problematización constante de la relación entre figura y fondo, fondo y figura.

El de Alvarez no es un proceso que sigue la intuición, sino que lucha contra el instinto. Existe una diferencia esencial en este enfoque, ya que da la impresión de que no se está

entregando a la pintura, sino resistiéndola. Alvarez describe estas pinturas como ventanas, no en el sentido premoderno, sino como un armazón literal, trasponiendo su infancia en las viviendas subvencionadas del Bronx con la experiencia de estar siempre viendo hacia afuera, imaginando mundos diferentes a través del marco de la arquitectura del edificio. Al describir la obra en su estudio, Alvarez señaló una de sus obras como una intersección entre Franz Kafka y Merce Cunningham; otra como una mezcla de Allen Ginsberg y la Mujer Maravilla. El cuadro de 2004 que se incluye en *Present Standard* es evocativo del camuflaje, ya que el sujeto de la obra—extraído de la primera plana del New York Times—se encuentra literal y figuradamente oculto por el tratamiento de su representación.

Para Alvarez, el contenido político está integrado en la estética. Esta actitud hacia la iconografía está presente de forma similar en la obra de Edra Soto, cuyos objetos escultóricos e instalaciones sacan partido de la reinterpretación colorida de formas familiares. En su serie *Tropicalamerican*,



the work—which was lifted from the front page of the *New York Times*—is both literally and figuratively hidden by the treatment of its representation.

For Alvarez, political content is absorbed into aesthetics. This attitude toward iconography is similarly present in Edra Soto's work, whose sculptural objects and installations capitalize on the colorful reinterpretation of familiar forms. In her series *Tropicalamerican*, flag patterns are stripped of their usual color scheme and supplanted by images of leaves, making monochromatic geometric compositions out of their original referent. Here, the natural and the abstract are treated with a sort of equivalence—a tension that is also present in Luis Romero's compositions, whose mark making imposes an ordered and formal pattern onto what could otherwise be seen as biomorphic abstractions. Nora Nieves' paintings share this affinity to geological representations, incorporating leaf patterns, grid structures, and decorative architectural elements. As with Alvarez's work, there is the sense that one

is looking both through and onto the picture plane. In Melissa Leandro's work, these concepts are approached through repurposed materials; heat-fused weavings and paintings made out of plastic tablecloths with floral imprints, ribbon, and cast-off materials, among other sources. In what the artist describes as an aesthetic of “cheap elegance,” Leandro creates labor-intensive geometric abstractions out of low-grade supplies. The difference between these high and low aesthetics is something all of these artists navigate.

In this sense, the Present Standard that unites these artists is one that requires observation—a material attitude that gestures toward the viewer, and suggests there is something to be discovered here and now.

**Edra Soto, *Tropicalamerican US*, 2014, Inkjet print on archival paper. Photo: Edra Soto**

**Luis Romero, *Untitled*, 2015, Acrylic on paper. Photo: William Bengston**

Traducida por Susana Galilea

**Nora Nieves, *Heater*, 2013, Fluorescent acrylic and graphite rubbing on paper. Photo: Nora Nieves**

**Melissa Leandro, *Fracturada, Blotched Out*, 2015, Heat fused woven fabric, plastic, vinyl, electrical tape on linen. Photo: Edra Soto**

el diseño de las banderas se ve despojado de su esquema de colores habitual y suplantado por imágenes de hojas, creando composiciones geométricas monocromáticas a partir de su referente original. En este caso, lo natural y lo abstracto son tratados con una suerte de equivalencia —una tensión que también está presente en las composiciones de Luis Romero, cuyas marcas imponen un patrón ordenado y formal en lo que de otro modo podría ser visto como abstracciones biomórficas. Las pinturas de Nora Nieves comparten esta afinidad por las representaciones geológicas, incorporando patrones de hojas, estructuras reticulares y elementos arquitectónicos decorativos. Como en el caso de la obra de Alvarez, uno tiene la sensación de estar mirando tanto a través del plano pictórico como a la superficie del mismo. En la obra de Melissa Leandro, estos conceptos se enfocan a través de materiales rescatados; tejidos y pinturas elaborados mediante la soldadura de mantelerías plásticas con estampados florales, cintas y materiales desechados, entre otras fuentes. En lo que

la artista describe como una estética de la “elegancia barata”, Leandro crea elaboradas abstracciones geométricas a partir de utensilios de baja calidad. Esta diferencia entre estética alta y baja es algo que todos estos artistas exploran.

En este sentido, el Present Standard que une a estos artistas es un tiempo presente que requiere observación—una actitud material que dirige un gesto al espectador y sugiere que existe algo por descubrir aquí y ahora.

## Latino Art Now Arte Latino Ahora

BY JGV/WAR

J. GIBRAN VILLALOBOS & WIL A. RUGGIERO

An essay for the exhibition *Present Standard* with artists Chris Silva, Alberto Aguilar, Maria Gaspar, Rafael Vera y Juan Chávez

**WHEN LUIS CAMNITZER WROTE ABOUT THE ROOT OF** Latin American conceptualism, he insisted on moving away from the "linear legacies and sequential traditions" of history. In fact, his approach was to take on a genealogy of a sort to keep "differences apart." His pursuit arrived at a miscellaneous form—one that resists definitions of identification and tradition, yet, is connected through the apt efficacy of the line. Camnitzer, no stranger to conceptual lines, aligns dominant ideas as nodes from which conceptualism rises as an ephemeral constellation. Ephemeral in the sense that dominant ideas must eventually recede into a recombination of new modes of working, new attitudes.

While genealogy talks about a tracing of "lineage," in this brief study we delineate the very way in which contour and line present themselves within the works of these five artists: be they boundaries, liminal spaces, formal demarcations, or just playful imaginary scratches on a surface. Herein, we underline the primary agent between the micro-macro relationship of a unit versus a resolved piece.

Alberto Aguilar's series of lines draws us both towards mediation as well as a designed rehearsal. The vertical rhythm of lines draws parallels to the renowned use of the modernist grid, but instead nuancely repeats vertical wavelengths. As a system on the wall, the lines operate both as their own pattern, but seem to also draw closely to Aguilar's own artistic practice, quite literally, as the lines repeat one after the other (in hopes of perfection?) in ordered form. Their light colors and internal rhythm draw the spectator to rehearse quite an anti-climactic revelation, if any: a mixing and remixing of everyday codes.

Chris Silva's murals operate on collage tactics—a recombination of source materials, manifesting a composition based on orders that seem lyrical but are largely orchestrated through his public dialogues. In the negotiation of distance between lines, figures and negative space, the artist's engagements with graffiti art become evident. Graffiti's own etymology signals an abstract diagrammatic relationship between numbers to produce a concept. The metrics of contour dictate the studied application and use of color.

JGV/WAR is the collaboration between J. Gibran Villalobos and William A. Ruggiero. Their practice includes writing, curating, research, and project development with a focus on socially engaged practice, and contemporary Latin American art. Villalobos and Ruggiero both are art historians and administrators whose research and projects position programming and civic engagement at the center of their practice. Through the use of "shadow curating," they antagonize each other to create projects that have undergone a conceptual and pragmatic galvanization. They were resident curators in 2013–2014 at the Chicago Artists Coalition, and have produced exhibitions for Sullivan Galleries at the School

of the Art Institute of Chicago and participated in panels for *Exhibition Entries* at Links Hall and Rapid Pulse International Art Festival. They have contributed essays to *Material Normal Monumental* (2015), *Suddenly Plastic* (2015), *Artifice from the Cave* (2014), and *Foggy Fantasies/Zones of Privacy* (2014). They have presented their research at the Hemi GS1 Convergence at UCLA, the American Association of Geographers Convention, and most recently in Havana as part of the exhibition Arte Presente. They recently presented the inaugural exhibition at Chicago Urban Art Society Orient featuring new work by Greg Bae. They are based in Chicago.

**LUIS CAMNITZER ESCRIBE ACERCA DE LAS RAÍCES DEL CONCEPTUALISMO LATINOAMERICANO,** e insiste en que hay que alejarse de "los legados lineales y las tradiciones secuenciales" de la historia. De hecho, su método es tomar una genealogía para mantener las "diferencias apartadas". Su búsqueda llega a una forma miscelánea, una forma que se resiste a las definiciones de la identificación y de la tradición, y que, no obstante, está conectada a la apta eficacia de la línea. Camnitzer, para quien las líneas conceptuales no son algo desconocido, organiza ideas dominantes como nudos desde donde el conceptualismo se eleva en una efímera constelación. Efímera en el sentido de que las ideas dominantes deben desaparecer en la recombinación de nuevos modos de trabajo, de nuevas actitudes.<sup>1</sup>

A pesar de que la genealogía traza un "linaje" en este breve estudio de cinco artistas selectos, nosotros delineamos la manera en la que el contorno y la línea se presentan en sus obras: límites, espacios límítimes, demarcaciones formales o simples rasguños imaginarios y lúdicos en la superficie. Es

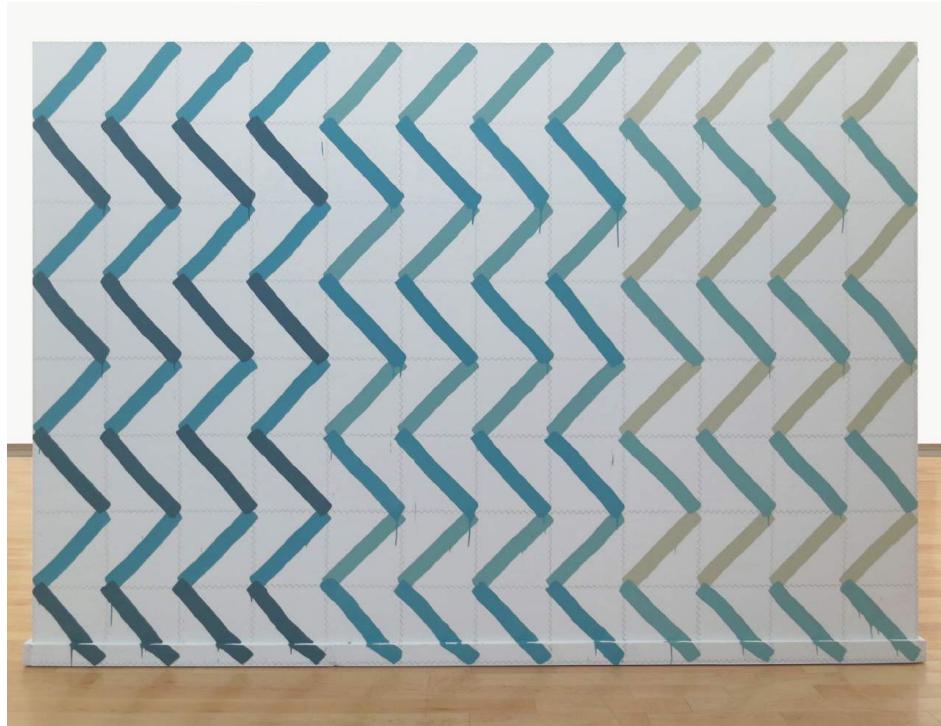
aquí donde enfatizamos el agente primario entre la relación micro/macro de una unidad frente a una pieza resuelta.

Los murales de Chris Silva operan en una táctica de collage: una recombinación de materiales básicos, manifestando una composición con base en un orden lírico y mayormente orquestado a través de sus diálogos públicos. Por medio de la distancia negociada entre líneas, figuras y espacio negativo, es evidente el contacto del artista con el graffiti. La etimología del graffiti (graffio, marca en la pared, y graphia, trazar en un diagrama) señala la abstracta relación diagramática entre los números y la formación del concepto. La métrica del contorno dicta la estudiada aplicación y la función del color.

El graffiti de Alberto Aguilar nos invita a sus silenciosas meditaciones y a un ensayo diseñado. El ritmo vertical de las líneas establece paralelos con el reconocido uso de la cuadrícula modernista, pero usando repetidas ondas verticales. Las líneas operan como un sistema en el muro, repitiéndose una después de otra (queriendo perfeccionarse?). Los



Chris Silva, *Trace Elements*, 2015,  
Mixed media, Photo: Edra Soto



Alberto Aguilar, *Course Work*,  
2015, Latex on wall. Photo: Edra  
Soto

Should these linear waves remain static on the surface of the wall, María Gaspar's "title" temporally breaks the material fourth wall and offers an ephemeral and epidermal vision. The plasticity of the inflated surface unconsciously expands and contracts reconstructing its surface contour. The exploration of the line may have to do with Gaspar's return to the wall as a muralist, exploding and exploiting temporally defined space.

To follow on Camnitzer's line of thinking, genealogies allow for the existence of differences within configurations and definitions. To read in between the lines, is to provoke a reconfiguration of those genealogic types. In this, we consider Rafael Vera and Juan Chávez. In Vera's approach to color, is tactically tied to application, but to the eye, gradations are formed by the angles of surface brush strokes and yarn threads. The color spectrum seen by the naked eye does not follow the gradation lines of technological palettes. Color definition is breached by an exploratory eye that captures multiple visions. Chávez, on the other hand, sources nature of material in larger

than life sculptures to monumentalize the technical richness of simple objects. Raw wood planks and the assorted debris of quotidian life is translated into sculptural bodies that refuse a finite function, sustained in recombination.

The proposals from these artists confront the legacies of traditions. But rather than being absorbed into dogmatic lineages, they express a chain of events that have lead to charting new territories, without drawing the lines.

Traducido por José Ángel Navejas

Clockwise:

Rafael E. Vera, *Contour Rug: Orange/Blue/Pink/Green, Violet/Grey and Green/Grey (detail)*, 2015, Contour bath rug, oil paint on wood panel. Photo: Rafael E. Vera

Maria Gaspar, *All That Also Means To See*, 2011, Plastic, thread, wood, fan, air. Photo: Mari Gaspar

Juan Angel Chavez, *Out of Touch*, 2012, Mixed media. Photo: Tom Van Eynde

colores claros y el ritmo interno invitan al espectador a repetir una revelación anti-climática, si es que alguna existe: una mezcla y remezcla de códigos cotidianos.

¿Estas ondas lineales deben permanecer estáticas en la superficie del muro? La obra *All That Also Means To See* ("Todo eso también significa ver"), de María Gaspar, rompe temporalmente el cuarto muro material y ofrece una visión efímera y epidérmica. La superficie hinchada se expande y se contrae cinéticamente, reconstruyendo su contorno plástico. Como muralista, Gaspar regresa al muro, explorando y explotando su posibilidad orgánica y mecánica.

De acuerdo con Camnitzer, las genealogías permiten la existencia de diferencias dentro de configuraciones y definiciones. Leer entre las líneas es provocar una reconfiguración de cierto tipo. En este rubro, consideramos a Rafael Vera y a Juan Chávez. La materialidad del tapete es la plataforma de Vera para mediar la fenomenología del color. En la serie *Contour Rugs* ("Tapetes de contorno"), los hilos de madejas de



un solo color (potencialmente) influyen y alteran el presunto estado monocromático del tapete. Los contornos de color definido son violados conforme Vera señala la superficie material, resaltando los acabados en los tapetes. Chávez usa las alteraciones en la historia narrativa de su material para llegar a la forma que contemplamos en *Out of Touch* ("Sin contacto"). Al visitar un sitio de caos y desastre intencionales, como un establo que ha sido incendiado a propósito, la forma distorsionada estalla en el semblante del objeto final. El uso intermitente de luz podría ser un recordatorio del fuego original que derrumbó las puertas y que llama la atención a las perforaciones de lo que de otra manera sería un círculo perfecto.

Las propuestas de estos artistas confrontan los legados de las tradiciones. Pero, más que ser absorbidos en lineajes dogmáticos, expresan una cadena de eventos que les ha permitido explorar nuevos territorios sin trazar líneas.



**THE  
ARTISTS**

Juan Angel Chavez, *Out of Touch*, 2012, Mixed media.  
Photo: Tom Van Eynde



## Alberto Aguilar

b. Chicago, 1974

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2001

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**EXHIBITIONS:** The Arts Incubator, Chicago; Steven Zevitas Gallery, Boston MA; Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst IL; The Franklin, Chicago; Roots and Culture, Chicago; The Luminary, St. Louis MO; Crystal Bridges, Bentonville AR; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; ThreeWalls, Chicago; Charlotte Street Foundation, KC MO.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Chicago Tribune; NewCity, Chicago Sun Times, Hyperallergic.

**AWARDS:** DCASE, 3Arts Award. Resident Artist: The Art Institute of Chicago; Crossing Boundaries, Art Incubator, supported by Arts and Public Life and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at University of Chicago

**INSTRUCTOR:** Harold Washington College, Chicago IL; University of Chicago.

**DIRECTOR:** Pedestrian Project

Alberto Aguilar, *Course Work*, 2015, Latex on wall.

Photo: Edra Soto

## Candida Alvarez

b. Brooklyn, NY, 1955

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 1997, Yale School of Art; BFA, 1977, Fordham University, Lincoln Center; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, 1984 The European Graduate School 2010-2012

**EXHIBITIONS:** Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Rena Bransten Gallery, SF; June Kelly Gallery, NYC

**PUBLICATIONS:** Mambo Mountain, drawinggreen

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Art21, NewCity, TimeOut Chicago, Art in America, Art News, NYTimes.

**RESIDENCIES:** IASPIIS, Pilchuk Glass School, The Studio Museum in Harlem, International Studio and Workspace Program, PS 1, The MacDowell Colony,

**PROFESSOR:** School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Cándida Alvarez, *A Man Waved*, 2004, Acrylic on wood panel, photo by Tom Van Eynde



## Luis Miguel Bendaña

b. College Station, TX, 1988

**EDUCATION:** BFA, 2012, School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Caribic (walking) Residency, New York to Sleepy Hollow; Allen & Eldridge (James Fuentes Projects); New York; Bienal de Nicaragua, Managua, Nicaragua; Malraux's Place, New York; Important Projects, Oakland; Preteen Gallery, Mexico City; Clifton Benevento, New York; Galerie Eric Hussenot, Paris; What Pipeline, Detroit; Arcadia Missa, London; Bodega, New York; Courtney Blades, Chicago; Peregrine Program, Chicago.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Kaleidoscope Magazine; Modern Painters; Flash Art International; T Magazine; Ecocore Magazine.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Artnet; Artnews; Vulture; Frieze Blog; AQNB; Chicago Magazine; Contemporary Art Daily; Art Agenda; Art Viewer; Art Space

**AWARDS:** Fellowship upon graduation.

**DIRECTOR:** Queer Thoughts, New York.

Luis Miguel Bendaña, *Putrid Flower (Sandinistas)*, 2015, Custom machine knit polyester, polyurethane, Xerox print. Photo: Luis Miguel Bendaña

## Paola Cabal

b. Bogotá, 1976

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2003, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BFA, 1994, Carnegie Mellon University.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Riverside Art Center in Riverside, IL; Elmhurst Art Museum; Columbia College Glass Curtain Gallery, Chicago; Columbia University (office of the Dean), New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Halsey Gallery in Charleston, SC; Gimnasio del Norte in Bogotá, Colombia; Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, NY

**PUBLICATIONS:** "Crescent" Exhibition Catalogue (Riverside Art Center; Annie Morse and Karen Azarina, authors); "Buddha Mind in Contemporary Art" (Berkeley: Univ. of California press)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** ArtNews; The Chicago Tribune; NewCity; Time Out New Delhi; The Indian Express; The Daily Constitution; The Chicago Reader; Charleston City Paper Awards: 2016 Fellow, Djerassi Foundation; 2014 Illinois Arts Council Fellowship, Department of Cultural Affairs, Chicago, 2006 Richard H Driehaus Foundation Individual Artist Award, Carnegie Centennial Award

**FACULTY:** SAIC, DePaul University

Paola Cabal, 3679, 2011, Chalk pastel on arches/rives on foam board spacers. Photo: Edra Soto



## Juan Angel Chavez

b. Chihuahua, Mexico, 1971

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; FIGGE Art museum, Davenport, Iowa; Krennart Museum, Champaign/Urbana, Illinois; Chicago Illinois State University, Normal Illinois; MASSART, Boston Ma; University of Texas, San Antonio, TX; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Linda Warren Projects, Chicago; Matthew Marks Gallery, NY, NY; Margaret Thatcher Projects, NY, NY.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-times, Chicago Reader, New City, Time Out, The Boston Globe. Collections: Eaton Corporation, Cleveland Ohio; Kirkland & Ellis LLP, Chicago, Jackman Wasser Collection, CBRE Chicago.



## Mariano Chavez

Big Wells, Texas, 1974

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Art at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**EXHIBITIONS:** John Molloy Gallery, New York; Western Exhibitions, Chicago; SideCar, Indiana; Open Source Gallery, New York; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago Biography: Newcity, Time Out Chicago, Chicago Journal, Ten by Ten Magazine.

Mariano Chavez, Ghost, 2015, Snake shed, paper, beeswax, form. Photo: Mariano Chavez



## Alejandro Figueredo Diaz-Perera

b. Havana, 1991

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2014, Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana; BFA, 2010, San Alejandro Fine Arts Academy, Havana

**EXHIBITIONS:** Aspect/Ratio Gallery, Chicago; Chicago Artist Coalition; Riverside Art Center, Riverside, IL; Antena Space, Chicago; Center for the Development of Visual Arts, Havana; Rapid Pulse Performing Arts Festival, DfBrL8r, Chicago; International Festival of Video Art, Camaguey, Cuba

**PUBLICATIONS:** SMS: Simultaneous Moments of Silence, Diaz Lewis, 2013.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Hyperallergic; Visual Art Source; Huffington Post; Chicago Magazine; New City; C de Cuba



Alejandro Figueredo Diaz-Perera,  
*The Silence (...) is Overrated*, 2014,  
1926 Westinghouse fan motor,  
broomstick, microphone, speaker.  
Photo: Cara Megan Lewis

## Dianna Frid

b. Mexico City

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2003, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Fiber and Material Studies.

**EXHIBITIONS:** The Poetry Foundation (Chicago); Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago); The Drawing Center (New York); P.S.1-MOMA (New York); Alpineum Galerie (Lucerne, Switzerland); Biblioteca Francisco de Burgoa (Oaxaca, Mexico); devening projects + editions (Chicago); Bravin Lee Programs (New York), Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago); Center for Book Arts (New York); and others.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Dianna Frid: Matter and Subject Matter; Turn of Phrase: Dianna Frid and Allison Wade; various artist's book editions by The Artery Archives. Bibliography: Art in America, Art Forum, artforum.com, Chicago Magazine, New City, Chicago Tribune; TimeOut Chicago, and others.

**AWARDS:** Artadia, Illinois Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, UIC Office for the Vice Chancellor for Research, Alfredo Harp Helú Foundation.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR:** University of Illinois at Chicago.

Dianna Frid, *Enjambment*, 2012-2013, Paper, paint, canvas, embroidery floss, graphite. Photo: Tom Van Eynde



## Diana Gabriel

b. Bogota, Colombia, 1979

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2007, Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois; BFA, 2004, Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago Artist Coalition, Evanston Art Center, Willis Tower, University Galleries of Illinois State University,

**PUBLICATIONS:** New American Paintings. Bibliography: Sixty Inches From Center, Inside the Artist Kitchen, ArtSlant, NewCity, Chicago. Awards: Best Documentary, Ego Fest, Brainard, Minnesota

**INSTRUCTOR:** Harper College in Palatine, Illinois Co-founder: The Contreras-Gabriel Project

Diana Gabriel, Fleco, 2015, Wood, staples, string. Photos: Edra Soto and courtesy of the artist



## Maria Gaspar

b. Chicago, 1980

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2009, University of Illinois at Chicago; BFA, 2002, Pratt Institute, NY.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago; Artspace, New Haven, CT; Alpinium Produzen-tengalerie, Switzerland; Jane Addams Hull House Museum, Chicago; National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago.

**PUBLICATIONS:** City As Site; After Adelita: Myths Heroes, Revolutionaries. Bibliography: Chicago Tribune; National Public Radio; Art Critical; New City, TimeOut Chicago.

**AWARDS:** Creative Capital Foundation; Joan Mitchell Emerging Artist Award; Sor Juana Achievement Award; DCASE; Propeller Fund; Maker Grant; Project Row Houses 2:2:2 Exchange Award; Experimental Sound Studio Artist Residency. Assistant Professor: The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**FOUNDER/DIRECTOR:** City As Site; The 96 Acres Project.

Maria Gaspar, *All That Also Means To See*, 2011, Plastic, thread, wood, fan, air. Photo: Mari Gaspar



## Melissa Leandro

b. Miami, FL, 1989

**EDUCATION:** Masters of Fine Arts candidate in the Fiber and Material Studies Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Bachelor of Fine Arts, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**RESIDENCIES:** ACRE; Roger Brown House residency; TextielLab, The Netherlands.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Efrain Lopez Gallery, Chicago; Arts Incubator, Chicago; University of Chicago, Illinois; The Franklin, Chicago; Gallery 400, Chicago; Flex Space, Chicago; Autotelic Studios, Chicago; Union League, Chicago; Lillstreet Art Center, Chicago; Wright Museum of Art, Beloit, WI; Fiber Arts Club, University of Missouri; Purdue University Galleries, West Lafayette, IN; N.A.W.A., New York, NY; ArtSeen Gallery & Flagler Art Space, Miami FL; Sly Rabbit Contemporary Art, Colorado; Central Museum of Textiles, Lodz, Poland; Golden Parachutes Gallery, Berlin.

**AWARDS:** Travel Grant, Dimensions of Artist Grant and Eager Grant from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Oxbow Merit Scholarship.

**DIRECTOR:** Fiber Material Studies Department, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Melissa Leandro, *Fracturada, Blotched Out*, 2015, Heat fused woven fabric, plastic, vinyl, electrical tape on linen. Photo: Melissa Leandro



## José Lerma

b. Seville, Spain

**EDUCATION:** Fellow, CORE program, Houston, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Maine; MFA, University of Wisconsin Madison; BA, Tulane University. Selected One Person

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Contemporary Art Museum in Raleigh, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York; Gallery Loock, Berlin; Galeria Marta Cervera, Madrid; Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, Diablo Rosso, Panama; David Castillo Gallery in Miami. Selected Group

**PUBLICATIONS:** Museum of Fine Arts Houston, The Saatchi Gallery in London, Misako & Rosen in Tokyo; Loyal Gallery, Stockholm.

**EDUCATION:** The New Yorker, The New York Times, New York Magazine, The Huffington Post, Art Forum, Art in America, Flash Art, Time Out NY, Time Out London, The L Magazine, Vice, Berliner Morgenpost, Art Papers, New York Observer, Art Nexus, Beautiful Decay, Modern Painters, Artinfo, Art on Paper.

**COLLECTIONS:** The Saatchi Collection, London, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Milwaukee Art Museum, Fidelity Investments Collection, Colección VAC, Phillara Collection, Dusseldorf, Germany, Rachofsky Collection and A. De la Cruz Collection. Associate

**PROFESSOR:** School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

José Lerma, *Banderas de la Clase Media*, 2015, Cotton, acrylic, steel, cement. Photo: Edra Soto



## Ivan Lozano

b. 1981, Guadalajara, Mexico

**EDUCATION:** MFA 2011, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BS, 2005, University of Texas at Austin.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; The Franklin, Chicago; Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago; Hap Gallery, Portland; Heaven Gallery, Chicago; Johalla Projects, Chicago; Sullivan Galleries, Chicago; FotoFest, Houston; Texas Biennial, Austin. Publications: Art21, Glassire, ... might be good, ArtLies.

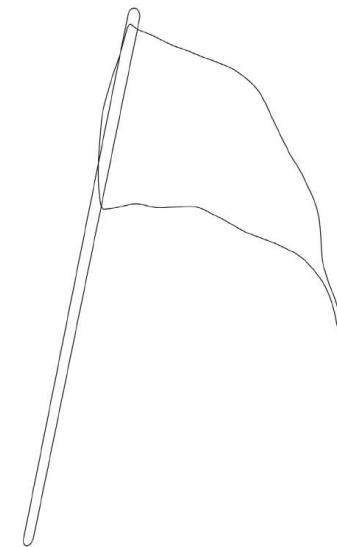
**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Art21, Art in America, Pasteogram, Headmaster Magazine, Chicago Tribune; Bad at Sports, ArtSlant, NewCity, TimeOut Chicago, Glassire, Rhizome, Hyperallergic. Awards: NewCity Art "Breakout Artist", Propeller Fund, James Nelson Raymond Master of Fine Arts Fellowship.

**INSTRUCTOR:** SAIC.

**EDITOR AND FOUNDER:**  
IMAGE FILE PRESS

Ivan Lozano, *Narcomantas (Hanged Men II)*, 2015, Vinyl, packing tape, ink, copper, rope.  
Photo: Edra Soto





### Jorge Lucero

b. Chicago, 1976

**EDUCATION:** BFA, 2000, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; MS, 2008, Penn State University; PhD, 2011 Penn State University

**PRESENTED/EXHIBITED AT:** MCA, Chicago; Links Hall, Chicago; University of Georgia; University of British Columbia; Teachers College, NYC; Metro State University of Denver; University of Northern Iowa; Evanston Art Center; OISE at the University of Toronto; Syracuse University; Virginia Commonwealth University

**PUBLICATIONS:** Proximity; Visual Arts Research; Art Education; Journal of Social Theory and Art Education; Problematising Public Pedagogy (Routledge); Artist-Teachers in Context: International Dialogues (Sense); Institutions and Imaginaries (University of Chicago Press); Subject Matters of the Arts (Sage)

**PROFESSOR:** University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Jorge Lucero, *estandard*, 2015, Small computer generated drawing of a flag on a white background in a white frame from IKEA. Photo: Jorge Lucero



### Harold Mendez

b. Chicago, IL 1977

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2007, University of Illinois at Chicago; BFA, 2000, Columbia College Chicago; 1999, University of Science and Technology, Ghana, West Africa; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, 2013.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museum of Modern Art / PS1, New York; Studio Museum, Harlem, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Drawing Center, New York; Renaissance Society, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Queens Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Phantoms in the Dirt; Fore; September 11; Several Silences.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Artforum, New York Times, Frieze Magazine, Chicago Tribune, ArtSlant, tNewCity. Awards: Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Illinois Arts Council Artist Fellowship, Efroyimson Contemporary Arts Fellowship, 3Arts Award.

Harold Mendez, *Untitled (Death mask)*, 2015, Burned cardboard box, soot, toner, oxidized copper reproduction of a pre-Columbian death mask from the Museo del Oro (Bogota, Colombia). Photo: Paul Hester



### Victoria Martinez

b. Chicago, 1987

**EDUCATION:** BFA, 2010, Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museu de Arte da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil; Dominican University, River Forest; National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago; Terrain Exhibitions, Oak Park; Duke University, Durham, NC; Arquetoپia Foundation for Development, Oaxaca, Mexico.

**PUBLICATIONS:** The Pattern Base: Over 550 Contemporary Textile and Surface Designs; Art Against the Law, The University of Chicago Press.

**AWARDS:** ACRE Marwen Alumni Scholarship; Chicago Artists Month featured Artist; Community Service and Professional Development AmeriCorps Grant.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Marwen, Urban Gateways, Center for Community Arts Partnerships. Lead

**ARTIST/FACILITATOR:** "Traveling Minds" community art collaboration with Urban Gateways, Benito Juarez Community Academy, and National Museum of Mexican Art for the Latino Art Now! Conference.

Victoria Martinez, *Dolores, te sigo amando*, 2015, Mixed media. Photo: Edra Soto

### Sofia Moreno

b. Coahuila, Mexico

**EDUCATION:** School of the Art Institute of Chicago; El Centro College.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Bridgeport Arts Center, Chicago; Defibrillator Performance Art Gallery, Chicago; s+s project, Chicago; Black Hole Cinemateque, Oakland; Mana Contemporary, Chicago; Oliver Francis Gallery, Dallas; Zhou B Art Center, Chicago; Links Hall, Chicago; Gallery 400, Chicago; Rapid Pulse International Performance Art Festival.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Daily Life Storage, Artsluts, Standard Evening, On Struggling Bodies, TAG.

Sofia Moreno, *Untitled I & II*, 2006, Mixed media on paper. Photo: Edra Soto





## Nora Maité Nieves

b. San Juan, 1980

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2010, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BFA, 2004, Escuela de Artes Plásticas de Puerto Rico; Residencies: Área Lugar de Proyectos, Caguas, PR, 2014; High Concept Laboratories, Chicago; The Cooper Union School of Art and Science, New York, NY

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS:** Material, National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, Chicago, IL; Where The Heart Is, Fresh Window Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Partitions, Nora Nieves and Liz McCarthy, Comfort Station with High Concept Laboratories, Chicago; By The Pleasure Of Doing, Espacio 20/20, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Homecoming, National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, Chicago

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS:** Entre-Sala, Área Lugar de Proyectos, Caguas, Puerto Rico; Displacement, Morton Collage, Cicero, Illinois; Lollipop, Galería Botello, San Juan, Puerto Rico

**AWARDS:** Artist Project Grant, Illinois Arts Council Agency, Chicago

Nora Nieves, *Heater*, 2013, Fluorescent acrylic and graphite rubbing on paper. Photo: Nora Nieves

## Josué Pellet

b. Aguadilla, Puerto Rico

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Illinois, at Chicago; Masters of Fine Arts from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

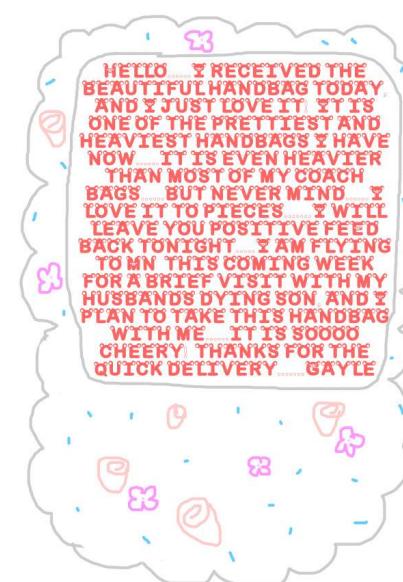
**EXHIBITIONS:** Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago; Contemporary Art Society, London, UK; Museo de Arte, Caguas, Puerto Rico, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago Bibliography: Art Nexus; Chicago Sun-Times; El Nuevo Día; HOY.

**RESIDENCIES:** Fundament Foundation, Netherlands.

**AWARDS:** Illinois Art Council Assistance Grant, Illinois; Puffin Foundation; CAPGrant, Illinois.

**COLLECTIONS:** University of Illinois, Chicago; Museo de Arte de Caguas, Puerto Rico; Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico

Josué Pellet, *Untitled*, 2012, Latex enamel on wood. Photo: Studio 408



## Maddie Reyna

b. North Carolina, 1987

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2013, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BA, 2009, College of Charleston.

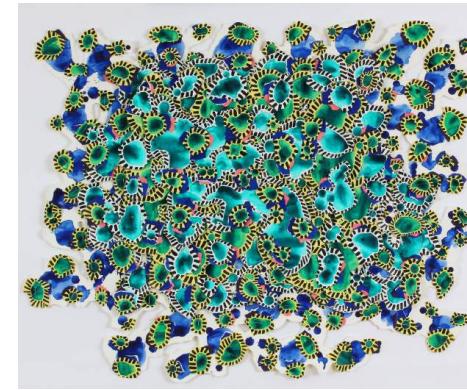
**EXHIBITIONS:** Upcoming; Group exhibition at Shane Campbell, Chicago; Recently; We Want x5, Roman Susan, Chicago; Snow n' Clouds, with Jakey Goudreault, Borderline, Milwaukee; Feel+Reminder, with Brook Slinkinson Withrow, Night Club, Chicago.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** ArtForum, NewCity.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Ox-Bow

**DIRECTOR:** Julius Caesar, Chicago; Dreamboat, Chicago

Maddie Reyna, *From Gayle*, 2014, Mixed media. Photo: Maddie Reyna



## Luis Romero

b. Mexico D.F., 1965

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2001, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BA, 1987, Boston University; Taller de Bellos Oficios, Universidad de Puerto Rico; Liga de Estudiantes de Arte; Escuela de Artes Plásticas

**EXHIBITIONS:** The Drawing Center, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Harvard University, Art Basel, Fleisher Ollman Gallery, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Roots and Culture, Adams Ollman Gallery, Art Rotterdam, The Franklin

**AWARDS:** 3Arts Artist Award, City of Chicago Community Arts Assistance Program, Pollock Krasner Foundation.

**COLLECTIONS:** Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, DeBruin Collection, Deutsche Bank Collection, Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Lambelet Collection, Collection of Anna Marx, Jedermann Collection.

Luis Romero, *Untitled*, 2015, Acrylic on paper. Photo: William Bengston

## Luis Sahagun

b. Guadalajara, 1982

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2015, Northern Illinois University; BFA, 2006, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

**EXHIBITIONS:** Anderson Museum of Modern Art, Roswell NM; Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, IL; Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, IL; Kruger Gallery Chicago, Chicago, IL; Jonathan Ferrera Gallery, New Orleans, LA; Union Street Gallery, Chicago Heights, IL; La Chikatana Galeria, Oaxaca, Mexico.

**RESIDENCY:** Roswell Artist in Residency, Roswell, NM; Arquetoپia, Oaxaca, Mexico

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** New American Paintings, Chicago Tribune, Vivelohoy, Gapersblock, Visual Art Source, MundoFOX, NewCity, TimeOut Chicago.

**AWARDS:** Northern Illinois University Merit Fellowship, Jack & Eleanor Painting Scholarship, Academic Research Assistantship-NU.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Northern Illinois University (2014).

Luis Sahagun, *Conflicts of Desire*, 2014, Nail polish, lipstick, screws, acrylic, spray paint, oil on cardboard.

Photo: Luis Sahagun



## Chris Silva

b. Puerto Rico, 1972

**EXHIBITIONS:** Lubeznik Center For The Arts, Michigan City, IN; National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago; Oakland Terminal, Oakland, CA; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Vertical Gallery, Zhou B Art Center, Chicago; Dock 6, Chicago; UICA, Grand Rapids, MI; Lorenzo Homar Gallery, Philadelphia; Gallery 3, San Francisco; Walker's Point Center For The Arts, Milwaukee; Thinkspace Gallery, Los Angeles.

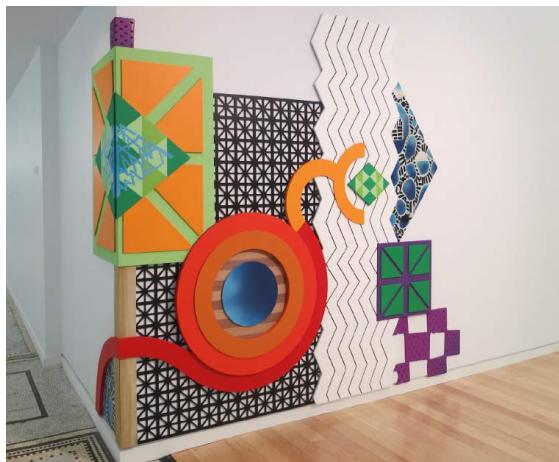
**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Raw Materials, Artletter.com, Art Ltd Magazine,

**GRAFFITI WORLD:** Street Art From 5 Continents, Tactile, High Touch Visuals, Juxtapoz Magazine, Time Out Chicago, Public Art Review.

**AWARDS:** 3Arts Fellow, ArtPrize Jury Award, Illinois Arts Council, DCASE.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Yollocalli, School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Chris Silva, *Trace Elements*, 2015, Mixed media, Photo: Edra Soto



## Edra Soto

b. San Juan, 1971

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2000, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BFA, 1994, Escuela de Artes Plásticas de Puerto Rico; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, 2000.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Threewalls, Chicago; 4th Poly/Graphic Triennial of San Juan, Puerto Rico; Roots and Culture, Chicago; Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York; The Luminary, St Louis; Cuchifritos, New York; Dock 6, Chicago.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Monsters & Dust; Composite; New American Paintings. Bibliography: Art21, Chicago Tribune; DNAInfo, Bad at Sports, TimeOut, ArtSlant, Newcity.

**AWARDS:** ArtSlant Grand Prize, DCASE, Propeller Fund, Joyce Foundation for the Center Program. Residencies: 3Arts Fellowship for the Ragdale Foundation and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Hyde Park Art Center.

**COLLECTIONS:** Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico.

**LECTURER:** School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**DIRECTOR:** The Franklin, Chicago.  
Edra Soto, *Tropicalamerican US*, 2014, Inkjet print on archival paper. Photo: Edra Soto



## Rafael E. Vera

b. Maracaibo, Venezuela, 1977

**EDUCATION:** MFA, 2002, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; BFA, 2000, School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

**EXHIBITIONS:** Avrill and Bernard Leviton A+D Gallery, Chicago; Bert Green Fine Art, Chicago; Seerveld Gallery, Palos Heights; The Franklin, Chicago; SHOP, Chicago; Cara and Cabezas, Kansas City; Evanston Art Center, Evanston.

**PUBLICATIONS:** New American Paintings, No 107.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** ArtSlant, NewCity, Artattler, Lincolnview Suntimes.

**AWARDS:** 3Arts Ragdale Residency Fellowship, 2013; George L. and Roman Siegel Fellowship Award, 2002; Edward L. Ryerson Fellowship Award, 2000.

**RESIDENCIES:** HATCH, Chicago; Ragdale, Lake Forest, FT

**LECTURER:** Loyola University Chicago.

Rafael E. Vera, *Contour Rug: Orange/Blue Pink/Green, Violet/Grey and Green/Grey (detail)*, 2015, Contour bath rug, oil paint on wood panel. Photo: Edra Soto





Left to right: Melissa Leandro,  
Ivan Lozano, Edra Soto

# THE EXHIBITION



Photography By:  
Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing

Left to right: Rafael E. Vera,  
Maria Gaspar

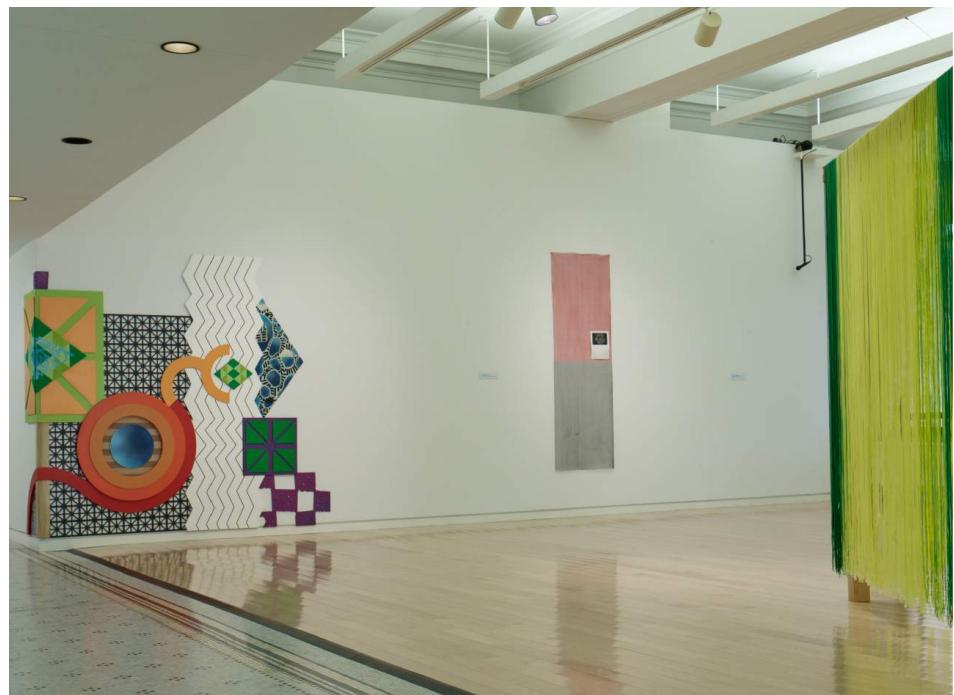


Maddie Rayna, Josue Pelot,  
Luis Romero



Photography By:  
Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing

Left to right: Chris Silva, Ivan  
Lozano, Diana Gabriel, Edra Soto



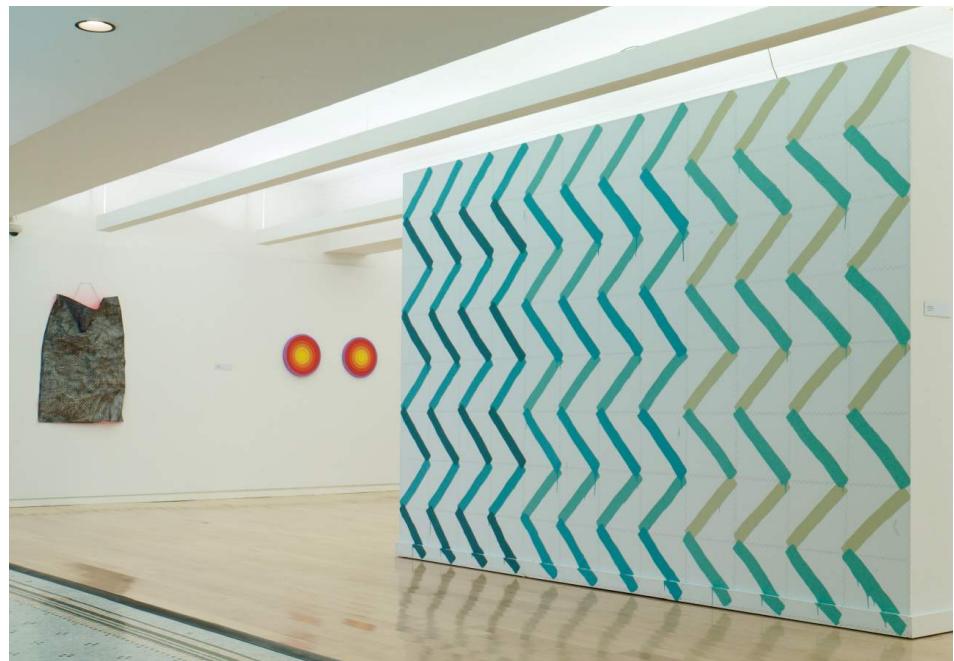
Left to right: Chris Silva, Luis  
Miguel Bendaña, Alejandro  
Figueroedo Diaz-Perera, Diana  
Gabriel



Top: Jorge Lucero

Left to right: Melissa Leandro,  
Ivan Lozano, Edra Soto

Left to right: Jose Lerma,  
Dianna Frid, Harold Mendez,  
Juan Chavez, Mariano Chavez



Photography By:

Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing

Left to right: Nora Nieves, Josue  
Pellot, Alberto Aguilar

Photography By: Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing



Photography By:  
Jon Miller Hedrich Blessing

Left to right: Mariano Chavez,  
Harold Mendez, Victoria Martinez,  
Candida Alvarez, Jose Lerma

Left to right: Juan Chavez, Sofia  
Moreno, Mariano Chavez, Luis  
Sahagun



Back cover:  
*Candida Alvarez, A Man Waved,*  
2004, Acrylic on wood panel,  
photo by Tom Van Eynde

## Pablo Helguera: Librería Onceles

The subdued lighting and cozy interior of the adjacent Garland Gallery complement the exhibition Present Standard in the Michigan Avenue Galleries. Conceived by Pablo Helguera, artist and educator based in New York, Librería Onceles is a traveling Spanish-language bookstore. Originating in New York in 2013 and named in reference to Mexico City's well-known street of book stalls, the second-hand bookstore has traveled to Miami, Phoenix, San Francisco and Seattle and seeks to promote the literature and culture of the Spanish language.

Various artists represented in Present Standard and invited artists from the larger community engage participants in their native language through workshops, tertulias and bohemias throughout the run of the exhibition. This activation effectively builds a diverse community brought together under the guise of a shared language and passion for the breadth of "latino" art and culture while recognizing and celebrating their differences.

### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Bohemia / Jam Session: Every Tuesday, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Tertulia / Salon: Every Wednesday, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Talleres / Workshops: Every Saturday, 1 – 3 p.m.

Spanish classes: Every Saturday, 10:15 – 12:15 pm

## Pablo Helguera: Librería Onceles

La iluminación tenue y acogedor interior de la galería adyacente Garland complementan el estándar actual exposición en las galerías de Michigan Avenue. Concebido por Pablo Helguera, artista y educador radicado en Nueva York, Librería Onceles es una librería en español itinerante. Iniciada en Nueva York en el 2013 y con nombre en referencia a la conocida calle de la Ciudad de México de librerías de viejo, Librería Onceles ha viajado a Miami, Phoenix, San Francisco y Seattle, y busca promover la literatura y cultura en la lengua española.

Varios artistas representados en Present Standard y artistas de la comunidad involucra a los participantes en su lengua materna con talleres, tertulias y bohemias durante el exhibición. Este activación eficazmente construye una comunidad diversa reunido por una idioma compartida y el pasión para el amplitud de arte y cultura "latino" mientras reconociendo y celebrando sus diferencias.

### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Bohemia / Jam Session: cada martes, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Tertulia / Salon: cada miércoles, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Talleres / Workshops: cada sábado, 1–3 p.m.

Clases en Español: cada sábado, 10:15–12:15 pm





