

Context/Contexto: Santo Domingo



Communion Within the Context

Charo Oquet

It is at times like these, when art runs the risk of becoming a commodity and a luxury item subject to the whims of the market, that Context/Contexto defines itself as a challenge, by proposing to return art to its true function and to its real potential for analysis and criticism of the major issues that affect people today. Simultaneously, Context/Contexto, breaking with today's usual art forums, proposed opening up new areas of involvement and openness within the social frame, without the need of transporting either the works or the public to traditional museum spaces and art centers, thus forcing the reassessment of artists' values and the rethinking of their social roles using the city as a frame for public debate.

But Project Context/Contexto's objective was not only to create new art areas. It intended to continue the links between Miami, FL and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, that began during the participation of eight Miami artists at the IV Caribbean Biennial produced by the Museum of Modern Art of Santo Domingo, in the exhibit Miami Tierra Caliente, co-curated by Genaro Ambrósio and me. Another of its notable challenges was to stimulate the artistic creations by transferring them to other places of reference and improving the traditional formats by adapting them to newer, more contemporary models while utilizing the urban space as a public frame for more extensive cultural relations. Context/Contexto furthermore tried to create new processes where artists would be forced to engage with the country and its people, instead of just transporting an exhibit without any real connections to the place. This proposal also had the intention to question the real function of art within the new social context, especially in regards to foreign artists who travel to other countries with the purpose of initiating a dialog with the country's culture. During an entire day, Context/Contexto attempted to break the barriers between the public and the artist taking the artwork outside of the white cube and while walls and creating new dynamics for the dialog between the two. In keeping with these objectives, in our judgement, Context/Contexto succeeded in turning the colonial city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic into a center for the dissemination of ideas between the artists, inhabitants, and posterity.

The support and participation of the artists of both countries was key. Each not only contributed to it with their time and money, but, more importantly, had the foresight to travel to another country and to believe in a project where the results were not guaranteed and where they would have no monetary remuneration. Context/Contexto also served as a platform where the artists, in an experimental mode and without parameters, could find a new basis for communion and play where they could expand their creative possibilities/needs and where new social dialectics could arise between public and artist.

Since the project called for the artists to make their own proposals, Context/Contexto did not require the use of a single curator controlling all aspects of the production. However, the implication of institutions, as well as of national and international curators, constituted in a guaranty for the effectiveness of the project. This participation gave the project a dimension as well as a rigor that, although the artist had absolute liberty to create, was a necessary term for its complexity. This participation did not limit itself to the selection of the artists or the writings, rather they were involved in all aspects of production and coordination of permits, and with the different national institutions. The support for the creation and production by the curators went beyond the usual curatorial roles as is normally understood. This involvement was crucial in allowing art to serve its true function: to establish a true communion with the public.

Miami Beach, FL, January 2003



Antonio Zayas and Charo Oquet in front of Carlos de Villasante's "Banner for Santo Domingo"
Antonio Zayas y Charo Oquet en frente del "Bandera Para Santo Domingo" de Carlos de Villasante

Installation of banner by Carlos de Villasante/Instalación de bandera de Carlos de Villasante



A CHARO OQUET project/Un proyecto de CHARO OQUET

Participating Artists/Artistas Participantes

Carlos Betancourt
Mario Dávalos
Carlos de Villasantes
Pavel Lerebours
Pascal Meccariello
Charo Oquet
Cesar Trasobares
Wendy Wischer

Introduction/Introducción: Charo Oquet

Texts/Textos: Antonio Zaya, Paula Gomez

Project director/Director de proyecto: Charo Oquet

Project consultant/Consultor de proyecto: Antonio Zaya

Project producer/Productor de proyecto: Laura Quinlan/Rhythm Foundation

Editorial coordinators/Coordinación de editorial: Charo Oquet

Project coordinators/Coordinación de proyecto/Santo Domingo: Paula Gomez & Sara Hermann

Selection of artists/Selección de artistas/Miami: Charo Oquet

Translations/Traducciones: Charo Oquet

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Front cover: Work by Pavel Lerebours/Obra de Pavel Lerebours

back cover: Work by Wendy Wischer at the ruins of San Nicolas de Bari/Obra de Wendy Wischer en las ruinas de San Nicolas de Bari

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CONTEXT: From Miami to Santo Domingo

Antonio Zaya

I Led by the Dominican artist **Charo Oquet**, in October, several of her Miami colleagues and she herself engaged in a day-long dialog with the colonial city of Santo Domingo. Those who were invited to participate in this Dominican task were **Carlos Betancourt**, of Puerto Rican origin; **Cesar Trasobares**, of Cuban origin; **Carlos de Villasante** of Mexican origin and **Wendy Wischer** of the United States. Beyond memory and forgetting, beyond exoticism and intolerance, Context would be what Charo previously stated in her proposal: interaction. It was more about reaching and activating spiral and root developments, beyond other people's previous experiences, routine, of different habits, of different answers to time, of calculated and spontaneous unexpected contingencies. In a concrete place and time, the ruin or the pedestrian mall of the colonial city of Santo Domingo, and even in the domestic interiors, with suspended identities, negotiating - with whom ever, the characteristics of the street action. Both plural and open, the format that Context was defining would entangle itself with the first connection or anonymous interaction, as with the dialogs that followed, till giving sense to the found thing deliberately in movement which could no longer wait to reach its expression or burst into a dialog, as Oscar Wilde would say. The sense of that expression simultaneously gains entre through multiple identities that are generated by everyone's everyone and each one's each one, without shades, without limit or with previous conceptual fundamentalism. This dynamic takes ownership, whenever possible, of the visible and invisible as well as the physical and emotional sense, until forming the reflection, the free state of things in motion, that do not settle as yet another imposition in the context to signify it abruptly, but rather through interviews, and through implicated expression. It is not about trying to rob the soul of the context but rather it is about using the context as a starting point to add maybe nothing, or perhaps everything. The artists gave themselves to the task of knowing the context, its capabilities and necessities, its "shared reality", what we are told, what we each tell ourselves or maybe to "others", equally made of language and sense, constructed, looking elsewhere. A morning, and afternoon, the necessary time to see it, to hear it, to smell it, to feel it, to touch it, to live it, allowing oneself to be invaded by it, to be seduced, to be watched, rejected, accepted, ignored by the context, whether it be in a pedestrian walkway or in a famous ruin. This is not about a visit but about an unlimited encounter, beyond the sacred white cube, sitting on the edge between meditation and action, of expression, of lights and shadows made of memory and forgetting, of destruction and construction, never of pause but of vertigo on the verge of knowledge made up of one's own and other people's, anonymous fragments.

II **Carlos Betancourt** extrapolates, dislocates or transfers the memory of his grandmother, whom he establishes as a paradigm and as a frame to this ballet with death and takes her in procession and in an invitational on the pedestrian walkways of colonial Santo Domingo and gives life to her memory in the absolute light of day with the people who interact with her commemorative objects drench in blue glitter, festive, with a shine that attracts and invites. Furthermore, the artist also takes these last, final objects, inherited from his grandmother, like a second act, to the island sunset, to the serenity and the apparent rest of a famous ruin where virtue nests like a crow, and spirits await a visit and lay vigil in the quiet night.



Chairo Oquet invites her countrymen as they pass by to cut, in the style of Matisse, whatever figure they want, in a primary color, chosen previously by them from several different rolls of palIALIZED color, the resulting figure - they would soon have to place - whenever they wish so that the artist could document photographically the urban journey with its resulting popular implication. Her work is not just public but it also left with the public which, in numerous occasions, took "his" figures stuck to their shirts or hanging on the memories and the laughter that provoke the click of the camera. At the same time, her work also leaves with them, entering the city and its labyrinth.

Cesar Trasobares on the other hand has located the scenes of his pieces in the Dionysian interior, beyond the exterior appearance that shines, beyond the noise of the public plaza and far from colonial history, exhibition and the masses. "Too much light is like too much shade, it does not allow us to see," said Paz. With a structure, in the form of a scale, of post-minimalist profile, his piece crosses different and vague surfaces of those architectural interiors, shelves, cubbish, bodies that, when engaging in a dialog with the different pieces, are impregnated with the journey, as if they were rails of a train in a journey that takes us along with it from wherever to wherever.

Carlos de Villasanté equally involves passers-by in his work. Like Belancourt and Chairo Oquet, he invites them to participate in an entourage or group which he draws and that on this occasion turns into a traveling sign or corner banner, although this time the volunteers literally spontaneously overlap themselves on his paintings and become elements that all of a sudden either open new dimensions to his work or return and dispense themselves into the streets of the city, but now as inhabitants of a painting. Here, here the artist relinquishes control, like a virus that spreads through contact, finally finding its expression as in our speculations, outside his system and his framework.

Wendy Wischer also projects on the somber exterior walls of a ruin a constellation of stars like an astral or an oracle throw of the dice on the architectural screen. It is about a projection of a specific astral, outer space and distant figure, intimately bound to the interior and belonging to the artist, like a projection on herself, like her fingerprint. Wendy makes obvious that art is a discipline of knowledge. The Greek technique that confused art and technique, appears to have adjusted to her apparently essentialist, numeric and projective and personal or transferring conception of the first and perhaps the last reality. In her work art and structure seems to harmonize, neither to frame chaos nor to give order to the unconquerable labyrinth, but rather to allow light the opportunity to express itself, where all is dark.

Finally Contexto emerged in an act of physical and psychological promiscuous activity beyond its authors, from the collective, it expressed itself, in an anarchical manner, as desire and repression, like subject and object, like an endless coiffaris and apothecias.



Santo Domingo, October 2002

Carlos Belancourt's project in Calle Conde/EI projects de Carlos Belancourt en la Calle Conde photos courtesy of Robert Miller Gallery

New art repository: the Santo Domingo Colonial Zone

Three Dominican artists' Proposals
Paula Gomez, Jorge, Museum of Modern Art

"Urban space offers a new challenge: to truly grasp it, implies opening ourselves to new sensations, new limits, new images, sounds, scents and behaviors." - Martin Molinaro

An enterprise of Chairo Oquet, a Dominican artist who resides in Miami, what the Contexto/Contexto projects proposed to accomplish was to give urban space a new meaning by allowing it to become a space were reflection, achievement, or confrontation could occur. Another of its challenges was for art to escape its regular boundaries and as by magic emerge changing the perception of those who think the city is already an established place. In order to support this proposal of renegotiations of the surrounding cityscape artist at the same time to propel a different creative dynamic, Sara Heilmann and I were invited to participate as curators, selecting in particular in the Contexto/Contexto project the Dominican artists Mario Davalos, Pavel Lerebours and Pascal Meccasalle.

Contexto/Contexto, proposes an encounter which "creates new venues and new alternatives for the encounter of contemporary art with the city, its citizens and its true function: to serve the public domain, where a consensus between human relationships and lifestyle occur."

In order to locate the place in Santo Domingo where the project would take place, we had to consider the different recreational areas the city had to offer where people, through systematic use, imprinted with their vitality. Fortunately, in the Colonial City we found that people were still using the plazas, small squares and parks as places to meet, relax and enjoy themselves. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that in general, many areas are not used as well as they should be, it is certain that it is a zone, fundamentally affected by the fact that they are mostly rental spaces. However, social relationships have not totally lost their share of humanization.

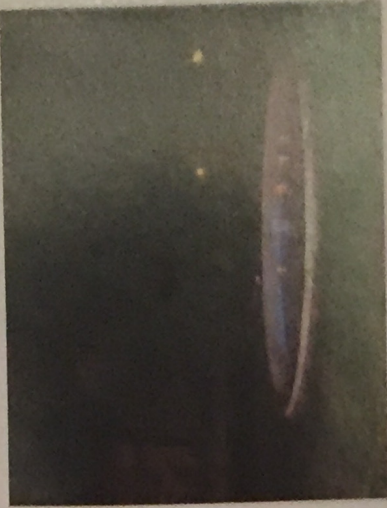
For this reason the idea of using the Colonial City as the location for Contexto/Contexto seemed so appropriate to us. Furthermore, it offered the possibility of giving continuity to one of the best initiatives begun during the IV Caribbean Biennial held by the Museum of Modern Art of Santo Domingo in November of 2001: the project of urban interventions in the Colonial City. As one should remember, this project had the participation of artists representative of national and foreign origins. The central axis was A Factory of Urban Interventions, directed by the Argentinean, Martin Molinaro: which was opened to the participation of artists of different creative realms, of both the performance and the visual arts: actors, dancers, video-film-makers, painters and multimedia artists.

On the other hand, during Contexto/Contexto which took place in a 24 hours interval in the Colonial City, the artists through the process of creating their art pieces, actions or installa-



Pavel Lerebours installing his piece in Calle Conde/Pavel Lerebours instalando su obra en la Calle Conde

Pascal Meccanello



ions, raised and generated new challenges and opportunities as much for themselves as for the participants and viewers. It brought both young creators, dissertations, investigations and preoccupations. It opened a Pandora box of reactions from an untrained public, provoking them in their own surroundings with unconventional artistic expressions.

The proposals of the Dominican creators were very variable, contributing to the wealth of the experience enjoyed by them and the public at large. For example, at a certain moment, Marco Dávalos' Sweet Crown installation, which was created in situ at the Royal Houses Museum's plaza and consisted of a large amount of bags of sugar arranged in the shape of a crown, depended on the degree of interaction with the public, who in turn gave it its ephemeral character. The provoking tone of the piece urged people to deconstruct it. As soon as word got out that there was a happening in the square, people arrived in masses taking part in the act. Like arts, they loaded-up with bags of sugar and dismantled the crown. The dynamics it caused broke with the zone's modest winds. For a while, street vendors, tourists, students, museum employees, office workers, shop keepers, construction workers and people from the neighborhoods stopped what they were doing to take part in the happening.

Finally, when the crown disappeared what replaced it were the bewildered looks in on people's faces that asked, "Where is the sugar king?" "What should he do now with their bellies and hands?" With Sweet Crown the roles in the relationship artist-public were switched: the artists "constructed" the piece in situ with the collaboration of the people who were in the small plaza and it was the people who were there that, in the form of a happening, completely deconstructed its discourse.

It was Pavel Lerebours' turn, with his piece Transit Zone, to control the pedestrian walkways where the Fine Arts Academy and the College of Dominican Visual Artists are located. For more than six hours the artist made an intervention in a high transit area: Calle El Corde in a section situated between Calle Las Damas and Calle Isabel la Católica, creating a linear pattern similar to a hopscotch which invited you to play, changing people's daily use of the street as well as its formal aspect. While some people seduced by the novelty decided to hop on the drawing, others stopped and approached the artist full of queries.

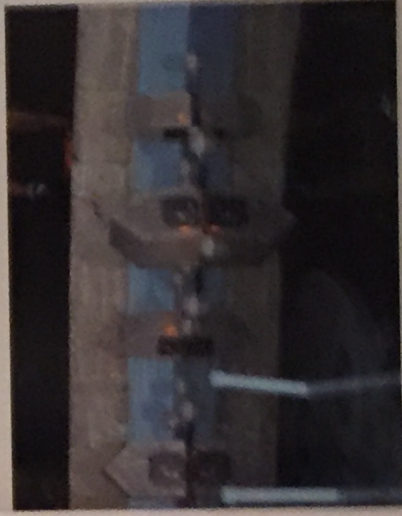
Unlike the previous mentioned pieces that provoked the participation and the spontaneous reactions by people on the street, due to the intimate story it told. The salvation of the being. Pascal Meccanello's entanglements did not demand the same restrictive contemplation. A recurrent theme in this artist's last works, who on this occasion return to it through the placing of offerings made of white paper lamps which had his image printed on them — he named them "salvation capsules". The ritual-like production of the lamps occupied a great part of the day. He chose as the place to install them the fountain located northwest of Columbus Park next to the Cathedral. At nightfall, before the ascertainment of all the attendees "the salvation capsules" floated, illuminating the plaza.

ContextoContexto was an effective attempt to enrich the daily lives of the inhabitants and passers-by of the colonial zone, taking the art to its streets, corners and alleys. It allowed all the resident, the tourist, the worker and the students in the surroundings areas, to enjoy and get involve in the archery. It created, surprising some and urging other to play to reflect, causing a new reading of their everyday surroundings, penetrating the space with the artist's outlook, hence providing, a different urban-cultural vision.

Conclusion of "Sweet Crown" by Marco Dávalos. La conclusión de "Dulce Corona" de Marco Dávalos

Segment of installation by Pavel Lerebours. Segmento de la instalación de Pavel Lerebours

Santo Domingo, January 2003





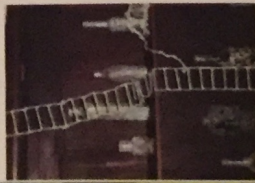
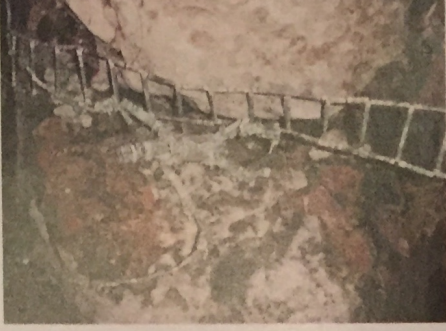
Carlos Belancourt

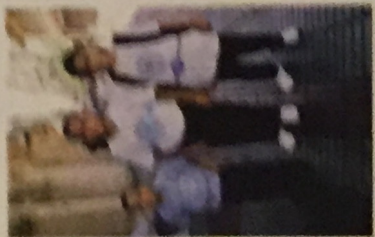


all photos of work by Carlos Belancourt courtesy of Robert Miller Gallery



Cesar Trasobores





Charmy D'Souza

logró, a nuestro juicio, que la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo en República Dominicana, se convirtiera durante una jornada en centro de intercambio de ideas entre artistas, transeúntes e interlocutores.

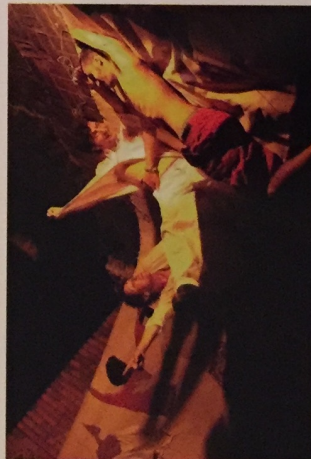
El apoyo y participación de los artistas de ambos países fue decisivo porque no solo aportaron su tiempo y dinero sino porque tuvieron suficiente fe y la necesaria confianza para trasladarse de un país a otro y crear en un proyecto donde los resultados no estaban en modo alguno garantizados, y donde no se contemplaba de antemano ningún tipo de remuneración monetaria. Contexto/Contexto también sirvió de plataforma donde los artistas pudieron entre sí, de un modo experimental y sin parámetros, encontrar nuevas bases de comunión y juego donde expandir sus posibilidades/necesidades creativas y poner en debate una nueva dialéctica social entre público y artista.

A pesar de que Contexto/Contexto no requería la función expresa de un curador que controlara todo -ya que la propuesta pretendía que los artistas hicieran sus propios planteamientos- la implicación tanto de instituciones y de curadores nacionales y extranjeros que se sumaron a los actos espontáneos y públicos, constituyó una garantía para que el proyecto fuera efectivo. Esta participación le dio al proyecto una dimensión y a la vez un rigor que, aunque los artistas gozaron de una libertad absoluta en la creación, fue al término necesaria por su complejidad. Esta participación no se limitó únicamente a la selección de artistas o escritores, sino que se involucraron en todos los aspectos de la producción, coordinando los permisos y con las diferentes instituciones nacionales. El apoyo a la creación y producción por parte de los curadores supero asimismo los esquemas habituales de lo que se entiende como estrictamente curatorial. Todo ello permitió que el arte recuperará su verdadera función: la de establecer una comunión verdadera con el público.

Miami Beach, FL, enero 2003



Carlos Betancourt and Monalisa with banners by Carlos de Villasante in Calle Conde, artists with the banner of San Nicolas de Bari/Carlos Betancourt and Monalisa con las banderas de Carlos de Villasante en la Calle Conde, artistas con la bandera en las ruinas de San Nicolas de Bari.



CONTEXTO: de Miami a Santo Domingo

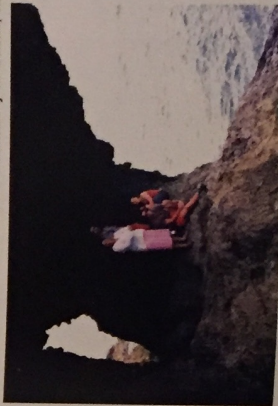
Antonio Zaya

I De la mano de la artista dominicana **Charo Oquet**, varios colegas suyos de Miami, además de ella misma, han dialogado un día de octubre con la ciudad colonial de Santo Domingo. Los invitados a participar en esta cita dominicana fueron: **Carlos Betancourt**, de origen puertorriqueño; **Cesar Trasobares**, de origen cubano; **Carlos Villasante** de origen mexicano y **Wendy Wischer** de los Estados Unidos.

Más allá de la memoria y el olvido, más allá del exotismo y los prejuicios, Contexto quería ser lo que Charo había apuntado previamente: interacción. Se trataba más bien de alcanzar y activar desenvolvimientos en espiral y rizoma, a partir de situaciones precedentes y ajenas, de cotidianidad, de hábitos distintos, de respuestas diferentes al tiempo, de contingencias imprevisibles, calculadas y espontáneas. En un lugar y en un tiempo concreto, la ruina o la calle peatonal de la ciudad colonial de Santo Domingo, y hasta los interiores domésticos, con las identidades suspendidas, negociando -con quien hubiera lugar- las características de la acción en la calle. Plural y abierto, el formato que el contexto iba definiendo, se entredaba con la primera conexión o interacción entre anónimos, como con los diálogos sucesivos, hasta dar sentido a lo encontrado deliberadamente en movimiento y que ya no espera para alcanzar su expresión, como diría Oscar Wilde o brotar en diálogo. La expresión de ese sentido se adentra a su vez en nuestras identidades múltiples que generan el cada cual de cada cual y el cada uno de cada uno, sin matices, sin límites ni fundamentalismos conceptuales previos. Esta dinámica se aduena por doquier del sentido visible e invisible, físico y emocional, hasta configurar el reflejo, el estado libre de las cosas en movimiento, que no se instala cual otro impuesto en el contexto para significarlo violentándolo, sino en entrevista, y expresión implicada. No se trata tanto de robarle el alma al contexto sino de añadir a partir del contexto acaso nada, quizá todo. Los artistas se entregaron a la tarea de conocer el contexto, sus capacidades y necesidades, su "realidad" compartida, la que nos cuentan, la que nos contamos a nosotros mismos cada uno, o acaso "otra", hecha igualmente de lenguaje y sentido, construida, que mira para una vez ser invadidos por el, ser seducidos, mirados, rechazados, aceptados por el contexto, sea en un paseo peatonal o en una ruina reconocida. No se trata de una visita sino de un encuentro a cielo abierto, más allá del cubo blanco sacramental, sentados al borde de la meditación y la acción, de la expresión, de luces y sombras hechas de memoria y de olvido, de destrucción y construcción, nunca de pausa sino de vertigo al borde del conocimiento hecho de fragmentos propios y ajenos, anónimos.

II

Carlos Betancourt extrápola, disloca o transfiere la memoria de su abuela, que erige en paradigma y marco de este ballet con la muerte y en procesión la lleva y convoca por las calles peatonales del Santo Domingo colonial y le da vida a su memoria a plena luz del día con las gentes que interactúan con sus objetos conmemorativos y



Wendy Wischer

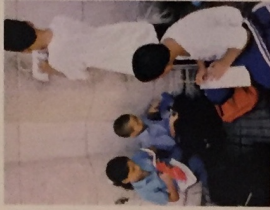


Comunión en Contexto

Charo Oquet

En un momento como el actual, donde corremos el riesgo de convertir el arte únicamente en objeto de lucro y especulación mercantil, Contexto/Contexto se define como desafío al proponerse devolver al arte su responsabilidad y a los artistas dar respuestas o cuestionar los hechos que afectan al entorno social en el que nos desenvolvemos. A la vez Contexto/Contexto se propuso reformular la idea de la ciudad como espacio intermedio entre arte y sociedad donde las dinámicas creativas locales pudieran establecer un diálogo abierto y sin fronteras con las dinámicas globales y cosmopolitas. En función de estos objetivos, presentamos estos nuevos productos artísticos en la calle dentro de su propio marco social, sin necesidad de trasladar nuestras obras ni tampoco al público a los centros tradicionales museísticos donde generalmente se desarrollan nuestras actividades culturales y artísticas, desacralizándolas.

Pero Contexto/Contexto no solo se proponía abrir nuevas plataformas para el arte sino que tuvo como objetivo continuar los vínculos entre la Ciudad de Miami (Florida) y la Ciudad de Santo Domingo en República Dominicana, que se iniciaron con la



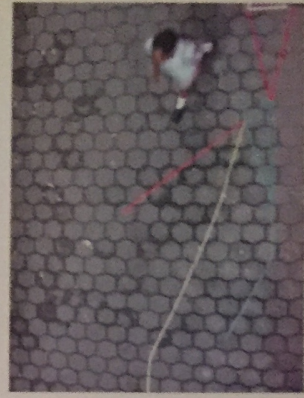
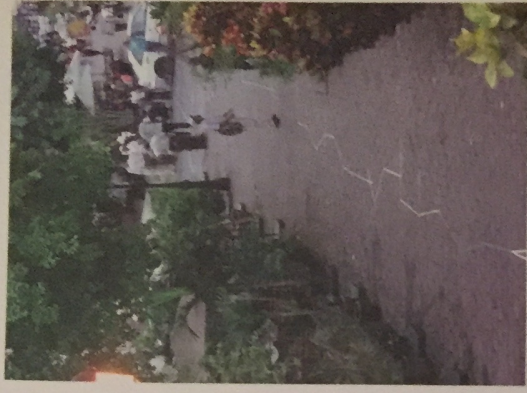
participación de los artistas Miamenses en la IV Bienal del Caribe realizada por el Museo de Arte Moderno de Santo Domingo en el 2001 con la exposición *Tierra Caliente*, que fue curada por Genaro Ambrosino y la que suscribe y conto con la participación de 8 artistas. Otros de sus retos destacables fue el de estimular la creación artística trasladándola a otras sedes de referencia y superando los formatos tradicionales adaptándolos a los nuevos en los que se realiza el arte de hoy en día. Contexto/Contexto también trato de crear procesos nuevos donde los artistas se vieran forzados a vincularse con el país y sus gentes, en vez de trasladar su obra de un país a otro y exhibirla sin conexiones reales, utilizando el espacio urbano como marco público para las relaciones culturales más amplias. Esta propuesta tenía además la intención expresa de cuestionar las verdaderas funciones del arte dentro del nuevo contexto social, en especial tratándose de artistas extranjeros que viajan a otros países con el propósito de iniciar un diálogo con su entorno cultural y su contexto social. Contexto/Contexto pretendía romper con las barreras entre el público y el artista sacándolo del cubo y paredes blancas y creando nuevas dinámicas para el diálogo entre ambos. En función de estos objetivos, Contexto/Contexto

above, *Passersby participating in Charo Oquet's project/Transeuntes participando en el proyecto de Charo Oquet*

Carlos de Villasantes



Pavel Lerebours



Mario Dávalos



co no especializado, provocado en su habitat con expresiones artísticas no convencionales.

Las propuestas de los creadores dominicanos fueron muy variables contribuyendo a la riqueza de la experiencia vivida por ellos mismos y el público. Por ejemplo, la instalación Dulce Corona de Mano Dávalos, conjunto de fundas de azúcar distribuidas en forma de corona en la plazoleta del Museo de las Casas Reales, dependió temporalmente del grado de interacción lograda con el público, quien determinó su carácter efímero. El tono provocador de la pieza incitó a la gente a deconstruirla. En la medida se corrió la voz de lo que pasaba en la plazoleta, la gente fue llegando masivamente y participaba en el acto. Como hormigas cargaban el azúcar y desmoronaban la corona. La dinámica provocada rompió el modus vivendis de la zona. Vendedores ambulantes, turistas, estudiantes, oficinistas, empleados de museos, oficinas, y de tiendas, obreros de la construcción y moradores del vecindario dejaron por un tiempo sus quehaceres integrándose al happening. Finalmente, cuando la corona desapareció en su lugar se leyeron las interrogantes: "¿Dónde está ahora el rey azucar?" "¿Qué hacemos ahora sus subditos con nuestras barrigas y nuestros brazos?"

Con Dulce Corona se invirtieron los roles en la relación artista-público: el artista "construyó" la pieza in situ con la colaboración de las personas que estaban en la plazoleta y fue la gente de los alrededores que a manera de happening la deconstruyeron completando el discurso de la misma.

Correspondió a Pavel Lerebours con su pieza Territorio para transitar, apropiarse del tramo peatonal donde se encuentran la Escuela de Bellas Artes y el Colegio Dominicano de Artistas Plásticos. Durante más de 6 horas el artista intervino la calle El Conde entre Las Damas e Isabel la Católica, cambiando su aspecto formal y la manera como la gente la vive en su cotidianidad. Una trama lineal a la manera de rayuela con un estilo libre que invitaba al juego, fue trazada por el artista justo en el lugar utilizado diariamente para el desplazamiento. Mientras algunas personas se decidían por la novedad se decidían a saltar en una pierna, otras se detenían y se acercaban al artista llenándolo de preguntas.

A diferencia de las piezas comentadas que provocaban la participación y la respuesta espontánea de la gente de la calle, Intrínquil de Pascal Meccanelli, tanto en el proceso de realización de la instalación como a su término, demandado la contemplación reflexiva dado lo íntimo de la historia que cuenta: la salvación del ser. Un tema recurrente en los últimos trabajos de este artista que en esta ocasión lo retoma a partir de unas lámparas volivas, "capsulas de salvación", las ha bautizado realizadas en papel con su imagen impresa en actitud de ofrecimiento. La realización de las lámparas fue como un ritual que ocupó gran parte del día. La fuente noroeste del Parque Colón a un lateral de La Catedral fue el emplazamiento elegido para colocalizarlas. A la caída la tarde, las "capsulas de salvación" flotaron e iluminaron el lugar ante el asombro de todos los concurrentes.

Contexto/Contexto fue un intento efectivo de enriquecer el diario discurso de los habitantes y transeúntes de la zona colonial, llevando el arte a sus calles, esquinas y callejones. Se logró que esta alquimia fuera experimentada en el entorno y que involucrara a todos: al morador, al turista, al trabajador, al estudiante... Sorprendiendo a unos y otros... inclinando al juego, a la reflexión; proporcionando una nueva mirada al entorno de cada día. Penetrando el espacio con la mirada de los artistas proporcionando así una visión socio-cultural y urbana diferente.

Santo Domingo, enero 2003

Work by Pascal Meccanelli in Colon Park/Obra de Pascal Meccanelli en el Parque Colon



Carlos Betancourt's artwork explores the communication between man, art and nature, in a relationship that can not be separated. His imagery (thelative, spontaneous and researched simultaneously), is loaded with multiple layers of meaning that is wrapped in realistic and primordial mysteries, generating moments of reflection and contemplation. Ultimately, his artwork is liberated of the polemics of reason and attraction under the realm of his secrets. Betancourt was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In 1981 he moved to Miami, where he studied art, architecture and industrial design at MCCC and the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale. His work is recognized in part by his large format vinyl photographs. Recently, a prestigious commission was awarded to him by Miami-Dade's Art in Public Places Trust for the creation of a monumental installation at Miami International Airport. Betancourt has received a Florida Department of State Millennium Cultural Recognition Award, a NEA grant and a Miami Beach Arts Council Grant. He represented the US in the 2001 Biennial in Santo Domingo. His work is part of such prominent collections as the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, the Centro Alameda de Arte Moderno in the Canary Islands, the Museo de Arte Moderno in Santo Domingo, the Low Art Museum and the Bass Museum in Miami. He is represented by Robert Miller Gallery in New York. The artist currently lives in Miami, Florida.

Mario Dávalos nació en República Dominicana, 1978. Vive y trabaja en Santo Domingo. Realizó sus estudios de arte en la Escuela de Diseño Altes de Chavón, DR, y obtuvo BFA en Parsons School of Design, New York City. Entre 1999 y 2002 completó su formación en el Instituto Superior de Arte de La Habana y en el Taller de Gráfica de La Habana, Cuba. Ha participado en numerosas exposiciones colectivas, concursos de arte y bienales. En el 2000 en DR en la colectiva Diversidad Caribe, Galería Lyle O. Reizby y 27x27 en el Colegio Dominicano de Artistas Plásticos, Santo Domingo. Ha realizado cinco exposiciones individuales de las cuales citamos: "Telurismo, Casa Simón Bolívar, La Habana, Cuba (2002); NYC-HAV-SOQ, Casa de Teatro, DR (2001); Manuales Galería EEEspañol, DR y DES-JORDAN); Exposición Paralela a la IV Bienal del Caribe, Unión Latina, DR.

Carlos de Vilasante - In 1987 a horrific car wreck put de Vilasante into a month long coma. Surviving the crash and brain trauma proved transformative for de Vilasante, who credits the experience as the source for his hyper attentive approach to life in general and to his own in particular. It also made him an artist. He now paints self portraits and portraits of the people around him that examine the notion of the self caught in the make-believe spaces between life and art, the conscious and unconscious world. De Vilasante was born in Mexico, studied art at the Rhode Island School of Design, and Memphis College of Art, and now lives in Miami. Through his nomadic travels he has become adept at assimilating and utilizing diverse cultural influences, which when combined with his grounding in art history and poetry, allows him to create polinate his work with a wide array of symbols. For example he uses evocative hand gestures as his personal take on Indian, "mudras" and gestural expressions. His uses cartoon like saturated color, collaged wallpaper, sown fabric, cultural icons and American pop imagery in his sort of meditations. (Petrycky Herbert, New Orleans, 2002)

Pavel Lerebours nació en República Dominicana, 1975. Graduado de Artes Plásticas en la Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes, Actuaciones en estudios de la Serranía de la carrera cinematografía y audiovisuales, en la Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo. Ha participado en las exposiciones colectivas: "Máscaras", "Exposiciones Paralelas a la IV Bienal del Caribe (2001); Concurso-Exposición Colectiva La Agroindustria, Casa de la Junta Agroempresarial (2000); "Máscara Proposiciones Contemporáneas" Casa de la UNESCO Cuba-República Dominicana (2000); Jóvenes Pintores Galería Valerio (2000). En el 2000 participó en: I Festival de Contemporáneos de la UPR y Festival de Cine de Santo Domingo. Il Muestra Internacional de Cine de Santo Domingo y en el 2001 en la V Bienal de Cine del Tercer Mundo, Guatemala. En 2001 obtuvo el Primer Premio Ficción del I Festival de Cortometrajes de la UIASD.

Pascal Meccanelli nació en República Dominicana, 1968. Vive y trabaja en Santo Domingo. Ha participado en numerosas exposiciones colectivas, nacionales y bienales tanto nacionales como internacionales, entre las que citamos: Evento 5, Suecia en el 2000 y Bienal Interamericana de Lima, Perú. Ha recibido nueve exposiciones individuales, la última de ellas en la Galería El Espacio, Santo Domingo, 2002. Premiado en varias ocasiones, cabe destacar el Gran Premio del 30º Concurso de Arte Eduardo León Jimenes (2002), Premio Instalación en la XX Bienal Nacional de Artes Visuales (1998) y la Beca para Artistas Unidos-Austriberg (1994).

Charo Oquet is inspired by her Dominican heritage, the connections between African and Catholic religions, Caribbean and European cultures, old and new, and widening the boundaries of perception. Her works celebrates contemporary popular culture. By confronting the viewers with objects that are both familiar and unfamiliar through the creation of large colorful installations, she borders the viewer with information and details creating both breathtaking presence with the mass and density of the objects and a seductive space which lures the viewer in. An intricate aspect of this process involves the connection of different found objects as well as new and raw materials. This process draws attention to the energy that oscillates between these two opposites. All the work represents a real desire to organize and to create unity without losing the fusion of materials but allowing the unification of different cultural icons and signifiers to create tension. The current series can be perceived as a repository of inter-related forms, images and materials through which she devises situations, where we can recognize both the differences that separate us, and the similarities that connect us. Charo Oquet was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She lives and works in Miami, FL.

César Trascobares defines his cultural practice broadly. In the studio, he produces a vast body of work in multiple media, most recently working with actual dollar bills in the cultural community he serves as art activist, curator, educator, performer and provocateur. Becoming involved in a broad, the esthetico-social inquiry, he expands the definition and boundaries of what an artist does in contemporary society. His web archive includes information and images of his work and actions over the last 3 years: www.cesarttrascobares.com.

Wendy Wischer was born in Wisconsin in 1971, and now lives in Miami. She received a MFA from FSU in 1995 and a BFA from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 1993. Wischer creates conceptually based work in a variety of media ranging from photography, to sculptural objects to site-specific installations and public works. Much of the work is based on blurring the separation between the spirituality of working with nature and the cutting edge of "New Media". She explores the sacred within the mundane, the monumental within the minute, unweaving boundaries created by culture and language and revealing common ground in the "in-between" of established categories. She is a recipient of several grants including the New Forms Grant, Miami-Dade Division of Cultural Affairs. Currently her work can be viewed in the national traveling exhibition, A Painting Over the Sole that's not Necessarily a Painting, and in Waiting, a public art commission in Delray Beach, FL. Wendy Wischer has exhibited internationally including New York, Miami and Madrid and recently, she was selected to participate in Art Projects at Art Base Miami Beach 2002.

