



Glaxis Novoa, *Timba*, 2017. Graphite on Carrara marble (marble recovered from Havana) 14 x 16 inches. Courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery, Miami Beach, FL.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The University of South Florida's Institute for Research in Art (IRA), made up of the USF Contemporary Art Museum, Graphicstudio and the Public Art program, is committed to introducing the students, faculty, staff and the broader community to innovative art that engages challenging issues confronting our global society and culture. Because of the proximity and the historical relationship between Cuba and the Tampa Bay area, the IRA has cultivated significant programs of cultural exchange with Cuba.

Noel Smith, Deputy Director of the USF Contemporary Art Museum and Curator of Latin American and Caribbean Art, has been researching and creating opportunities for exchange and the production and presentation of work by leading artists from Cuba for more than a decade. Some of the highlights of her curatorial projects for the USF Contemporary Art Museum include *Los Carpinteros: Inventing the World* in 2005; *Carlos Garaicoa*, a solo exhibition in 2010; and the inclusion of José Toirac and Meira Marrero in 2013's group exhibition titled *Subrosa: The Language of Resistance*. In the summer of 2013 she worked with Denny Matos to present an exhibition of Cuban video. In addition she has organized artist residencies to produce prints at Graphicstudio for Ibrahim Miranda, Liset Castillo, Abel Barroso, Los Carpinteros, Carlos Garaicoa, Esterio Segura, and most recently, Glenda León.

For *Climate Change: Cuba/USA*, Noel Smith has invited four Cuban and Cuban-American artists to produce new work in a variety of media that reflects on the changing political environment and its effect on their practice and personal lives. Glaxis Novoa, Celia y Yunior, Antonio Eligio Fernández "Tonel" and Javier Castro address a range of themes including survival, uncertainty, prosperity, greed, tourism, and capitalism. In addition to organizing the exhibition and encouraging new work, Noel conducted a series of interviews with each of the artists highlighting their personal history and illuminating aspects of their practice. The interviews are printed separately from this brochure and are available to all visitors.

Cuba has long been recognized for its strong support of culture and the arts, and has gained international prominence after the emergence of a generation of artists in the 1980s. The Tampa Bay area has rich historical connections to Cuba including cigar makers from Cuba setting up factories in the 1880's, José Martí's repeated visits in the 1890s seeking funds for the liberation of Cuba from Spain, and Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders headquartered in Tampa during the Spanish-American War of 1898.

In the 1980s the founding director of Graphicstudio, Donald Saff, directed the Rauschenberg Overseas Cultural Interchange (ROCI). As part of this global project Rauschenberg produced a series of paintings on aluminum and steel for *ROCI CUBA* that were exhibited at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Casa de las Américas and Castillo de la Fuerza in Havana in 1988. The response to this project was at once inspiring for generations of artists while also provoking some to consider the project an act of American imperialism.

Under the Obama administration, the IRA welcomed the establishment of direct flights between Havana and Tampa and the increased availability of visas, making residencies at Graphicstudio easier. However, relations with Cuba remain complicated and in flux. President Trump announced the tightening of regulations on Americans traveling to Cuba and the strengthening of the U.S. trade embargo in June 2017, however he did not change the Obama-era restoration of diplomatic relations including the reopening of embassies and the exchange of ambassadors. The IRA's history and participation in the evolving relationship between Cuban contemporary art and the United States position us well to respond to these developments.

It is with great appreciation that I acknowledge Noel Smith for her many years of curatorial research and engagement with artists from Cuba. The remarkable staff of CAM function as a team to ensure that all aspects of this exhibition and related programming meet the highest professional standards for presenting contemporary art. Exhibition Designer Tony Palms worked closely with the artists to assist in the production of their commissioned works and to design the overall installation, while Exhibitions Manager/Registrar Shannon Annis coordinated the loans of works and shipping. Don Fuller provided oversight for printed materials and the banner, and Madeline Baker served as the graphic designer of the materials associated with the exhibition. Others on the team who worked together to bring about this exhibition and its related educational programs and special events include Bobby Aiosa, Kate Alboreo, Amy Allison, Alyssa Cordero, Leslie Elsasser, Peter Foe, Mark Fredricks, Sarah Howard, Eric Jonas, Vincent Kral, Will Lytch, Scott Pierce, David Waterman, and Randall West, as well as students Jessica Abbajay, Adam Bakst, Ronika Baldwin, Natalie Bohin, Faith Gofton, Leya Ibrahim, Ashley Jablonski, Samantha Juárez, Sierra Louder, Zoe McIlwain, Angel Poulos and Annalith Garzon.

Several aspects of this exhibition were made possible by the generous support of Dr. Allen Root in honor of his late wife Janet G. Root. We are deeply grateful for his commitment to the cultural exchange afforded by this memorial contribution. Contributions made by attendees of a fundraising trip to Cuba in early 2017 also helped enable this exhibition. Many others from across campus and in the community have collaborated with various aspects of *Climate Change: Cuba/USA*. For their interest and support, I thank Matthew Knight and Andy Huse from the USF Library Special Collections, the Cuban American Student Association, USF World, the CAM Club, USF's Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Prodigy Program at the University Area Community Development Corporation.

It is always the quality of the work that makes for a great exhibition. I am most grateful to Glaxis Novoa, Javier Castro, Antonio Eligio Fernández "Tonel" and Celia y Yunior for their participation in *Climate Change: Cuba/USA*.

Margaret Miller, *Director and Professor, USF Institute for Research in Art*



Glaxis Novoa, *Tania*, 2014. Acrylic on canvas, 39-1/2 x 78-3/4 inches. Courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery, Miami Beach, FL.

CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN ART

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Climate Change: Cuba/USA exhibition and events are supported in part by USF World, USF Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC), CAM Club, USF Cuban American Student Association (CASA), and in memory of Janet G. Root. The USF Contemporary Art Museum is recognized by the State of Florida as a major cultural institution and receives funding through the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Arts Council of Hillsborough County, Board of County Commissioners. The USF Contemporary Art Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

Javier Castro, still from *Cuatro Cosas Básicas/Four Basic Things*, 2018. Video installation, four digital videos; 6:30 min. each USFCAM Commission 2018.



CLIMATE CHANGE: CUBA / USA

JANUARY 12 – MARCH 3, 2018 • USF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM

JAVIER CASTRO • GLEXIS NOVOA • CELIA Y YUNIOR • ANTONIO ELIGIO FERNÁNDEZ "TONEL"

