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in several works from the series including *Untitled 06*. But the first ten pieces give priority to the evocation of artists like Cundo Bermúdez or Mario Carreño, figures that were as familiar during her adolescence and formative years as they were central for the development of a narrative of the art from Cuba.

These first ten “Rebus + Diversions”—a term that in addition to evoking the divertimento and freedom with which the series was approached, also offers the possibility of multiplying the versions and the tacit allusion to the subversion of limits—are constructed with fragments from photographed papers: works, letters, exhibitions, and well as influences and events that were decisive for the art of the island. Beginning with the beautiful piece *Untitled 11*—in which the home of Walter Gropius is intervened with a tree—forms created with balsa wood are introduced and three-dimensionality is increased with resources like cords and wires. The assembly with threads and forms in the erotic collage *Untitled 12*, a tribute to Agustín Fernández, is a beautiful allusion to the affective memory that connects biographical and art history elements. The last seven *rebus* increase the creative intensity, not only because of the type of referential appropriations and materials, but also as a result of the artistic bravado that places María Martínez-Cañas in her role of favorite student of László Moholy-Nagy. It is as if, through her own artistic leap, Martínez-Cañas embodied the transformation that sparked the Hungarian teacher’s influence and championing of the New Bauhaus in the art of North America. With this series, she has answered Moholy-Nagy’s challenge to “think about the history of art and to reproduce old formulas and experiment with a vision that stretches the human ability to face new tasks.”

ADRIANA HERRERA

Fabián Peña

David Castillo Gallery

Fabián Peña (Havana, 1976) belongs to a generation of Cuban artists that became known during the first decade of the 21st century. It is a generation that was greatly affected, on the one hand, by the very harsh economic reality of Cuba’s so called Special Period in Time of Peace, announced in 1991 after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, and, on the other, by the worsening of the commercial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States, and by the return of Cuban military servicemen from the “African Wars.” Politically and culturally speaking, it was a period in which the “battles of ideas” emerged to vindicate the national values from revolutionary nationalist positions as means of resistance and to defend revolutionary achievements against the end of the utopian communist project.

Within this context, the work by Fabián Peña becomes known during the 2000s and immediately stands out from his generation for the use of innovative materials in his work. Flies and mosquitoes, and then the gradual introduction of roaches, egg shells, and papers, among other things, become some of the materials employed to render his symbolically powerful works. Prominent among them are pieces like *Frozen Flight* (2008), a flag created with fly wings, nylon thread, fishing hook, and light; *Pintura Épica* (Epic Painting, 2010), created with roach wings fragments on canvas. Also noteworthy of mention are works from the exhibition titled *The Book, the Egg, and the Fly* (2017) shown at the David Castillo Gallery, which included works like *Horizontal Portrait* and *It’s Just a Dream*. And there is also the piece titled *Working for Change*, rendered with crushed flies on canvas.

Seen as a whole, the materials in Peña’s work maintain a direct relationship with the biology of his surroundings, with everyday life. Therefore, his work feeds from autobiographical archives, from a personal perspective that functions as a metabolic process of his reality. Using everyday life as material and translating it from a place of introspection, whether through a neo-figurative poetic key or in a neo-conceptual one (Fabián Peña combines both poetics), it became a very recurrent practice in the artistic production of the 1980s and 1990s. Also very present were patriotic symbols and slogans used by the Revolution’s rhetoric of cultural politics to indoctrinate and mobilize the masses as part of its communist social project. In this instance, the innovative element in Peña’s proposal would consist of incorporating to the spectrum of introspection elements from the biology of everyday life that are part of a dimension verging on the scatological. It is a biology ingrained in the world of those insects that populate Cuban homes under conditions of material scarcity and pauperization. In popular culture flies, for instance, represent a tenacious spirit, indomitable resolve and fireproof value in the face of conflict. On the other hand, those very qualities also make them a symptom of decomposition, dirt, and an evocation of death.

Degradation as matter or concept that loses its qualities is an implicit idea in works like *Coca-Cola del Olvido* (Coca-Cola of the Oversight). There, Peña creates paper pulp from books, magazines, and publications of all sorts centered on revolutionary politics and ideology that have been edited during the revolutionary period. When observing this objectual installation, the bottles it contains look like a hodgepodge of randomly superimposed texts, images, and phrases; converging voices that produce unexpected meanings or meaningless discourses. A similar operation appears in the piece titled *Working for Change*, in which Peña mixed together slogans—rendered with crushed flies—used in the last US presidential election.

The exhibition “The Book, the Egg, and the Fly” reveals an analytical artist, both discursively and poetically. Degradation, the erosion of meaning suffered by the images and the cultural discourse of our time, guide the central interest in the work by Peña. In his work, ideologies and their forms of representation are subscribed to a political program that promises the masses the very best of two possible worlds. Interestingly, Peña recognizes such experience within the context of a totalitarian system, through a piece like *Coca-Cola del Olvido*, but also in the antithetical social model, capitalism, in works like *Working for Change*. Both works address two models of antithetical societies. And

Fabian Peña. *Coca-Cola del Olvido* (Coca-Cola of the Oversight), 2016. Compressed paper, ink, wood. 9 ½ x 16 in. (24.1 x 40.6 cm). Courtesy: David Castillo Gallery.



both works also question the colors with which each system paints the way of life it promises to its citizens. One, sacrificing the present for a utopian future in which inequality does not exist, like a post-historic world where all periods converge; and, the other, seducing the subject's desire into an eternalized present with the promise of infinite consumption. Fabián Peña appears to be telling us that neither model is the right one.

DENNYS MATOS

Alba Fernanda Triana Sala de espera, Art@Work

At *Art@Work*, an alternative art space located in the waiting room of orthodontist Arturo Mosquera's medical practice, Miami-based Colombian artist and composer Alba Fernanda Triana installed the work titled *Partitura Sonora* (Sounding Score, 2009). The piece consists of a sound and visual installation generated through an interactive interface that allows viewers to activate and enter into a dialog with a composition containing the entire range of variations of a score created by Triana. Once manipulated by the spectator, the piece is modified through algorithms from the original composition. At the same time, beautiful circles of different colors, which appear in the "book" are also projected on the screen at the back of the exhibition room, representing the notes of prerecorded musical sounds. When played, these notes change form and size through a projection that runs concurrently with the audio. In this instance, the book becomes the instrument, and the piece is played through simple actions like turning a page or touching the buttons that appear on the screen.

For the most part, the body of work by Triana reflects on the constitutive elements of music and proposes the construction of sound and visual bridges that offer viewers an intuitive approach to the installations for a first-hand, auditory, and aesthetic experience. On the other hand, her work combines visual and sound architectures that meet the demands for a hybrid and open understanding of contemporary art. Triana is concerned with the contemporary redefinition of music, and

Alba Fernanda Triana. *Sounding Score*, 2009 - 2011. Interactive musical installation. Variable dimensions.



works with vibrations and noises in an attempt to redefine the basic elements of both sound and visual compositions from a polyphonic "perspective."

One of the fundamental questions that Triana asks in her work is whether or not music must be exclusively perceived through only one of our senses. This question becomes the point of departure for the construction of installations whose visual elements stem from her continuous reflection on the physicality of sound: that visual space in which art, music, and technology intersect. She experiments with vibrations, frequencies, algorithms, and images that have led her through the years to the production of a solid and poetic body of work that explores the operative structures of musical composition, their polysemy, epistemology, authorship, and the visual space that they occupy.

About *Partitura Sonora*, Triana said the following: "The book becomes an instrument, the instrument is played by the viewer, the viewer becomes a musician, the viewer becomes a coauthor; and rather than being generated by the author, the piece is generated by the instrument, and so on and so forth." In this manner, the piece plays with the idea of mutation, of randomness, of the dialectic between openness and the adoption of different roles, as well as with the intrinsic properties of musical structure.

Every time viewers activate the book, it emulates a new visual and auditory representation of the original score. In this manner, viewers become the temporal performers of the score and every time that they play one of the integral parts of the composition—whose activation depends on the points and colors pressed on the book—they are exposed to, and can reflect on, the relevant aspects of the musical composition—like the tone, registry, duration, dynamics, and timbre—in an intuitive and random manner. It is a process that erases any preconceived hierarchies between the composer and the public, allowing for the compositional and auditory experiences to become collective rather than individual events.

Musically, *Partitura Sonora* evokes the prerecorded sounds of a *Glockenspiel*, and the drawings emerging from the pages of the virtual book create an environment reminiscent of the traces left by raindrops on bodies of water. The visually generated image is a real time representation of every detonated action. It pushes the boundaries between the merely auditory, the visual, and the tactile in response to one of her most important areas of research: the study of the behavior of musical waves, the manner in which they travel and how to hypothetically visualize them.

Partitura Sonora perfectly functions under the precepts of an open work in which the art object serves as score and instrument but also as art space and installation that encourages viewers to experience music from a different, more interactive and visually attractive, perspective. Participants become artists and performers, playing for the rest of the people waiting for their medical consultations.

The installations by Alba Fernanda Triana are translated into participatory experiences that are also meditative, environmental, and interactive. In them, the exchange of roles between listeners and performers is central for the work to be completed; in this manner, the role of the composer merges with that of the viewer. While this does not necessarily mean the simplification of the compositional process, it does allow for the viewer to be immersed in a visual and auditory experience that he himself performs without needing to know how to play an instrument or to have a musical education. Viewers find meaning in *Partitura Sonora* only when they participate to modify it, as the piece is developed into what Umberto Eco called an "Open work,"