



Personal Culture: New Art from Latin Americans
challenges assumptions through quest for identity

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Summary: *Personal Culture: New Art from Latin Americans*, January 16 – March 21;
Reception, Winter Gallery Night, Friday, Jan. 16, 5 – 9 p.m.; Artist Talk
and Reception, Tuesday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m. Frederick Layton Gallery, 273 E.
Erie St. Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free. 414.847.3200. miad.edu.

Hi-res images/bios available at site listed on page 2.

PRESS RELEASE

MILWAUKEE... Five artists challenge assumptions about Latin America and “Latin American art” in *Personal Culture: New Art from Latin Americans*, on view Gallery Night January 16 – March 21 at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Wisconsin’s only independent, four-year college of art and design.

“Far from being a monolithic entity, Latin America is a complex system of visible and invisible threads and boundaries,” said Natanya Blanck, assistant professor of Art History and curatorial advisor to the exhibition. “Geographically diverse and socially complex, it is a region where people from different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds have melded into 20 modern republics. This diversity provides immensely potent and complex sources and inspiration for artists.”

“Assumptions about ‘Latin American’ art belie the multi-faceted complexity, depth and range of contemporary work produced by artists born in the region and by U.S.-descendants of Latin Americans,” said Mark Lawson, director of galleries.

“The artists’ individual relationships to what is commonly regarded as ‘Latin American’ culture and to the culture of their place of residence are as varied and as complex as their own personal histories and backgrounds. These artists grapple with the paradox of a culturally diverse personal identity that often does not fit comfortably in any one national or ethnic paradigm.”

They are:

Victor Cartagena (El Salvador) resides in San Francisco – Cartagena’s art has evolved from his work in the ’90s, which focused on his struggle as an immigrant fleeing violence and oppression in his homeland of El Salvador. Now, he presents his outsider’s perceptions of aspects of American culture.

Santiago Cucullu (Argentina) resides in Milwaukee – One of the city’s most widely exhibited, internationally renowned artists, Cucullu is perhaps best known for wall installations. This exhibition shows some less familiar sides of his creative output – video and sculptural pieces.

Mirta Kupferminc (Argentina) resides in Buenos Aires – Coming from a family of Eastern European Holocaust survivors, Kupferminc exemplifies the diversity of backgrounds and cultural perspectives within Latin America. Her work embodies her personal experience and heritage with imagery that relates much more to her Jewish roots than to forms more closely associated with Latin American culture. *She is also the Guido Brink Visiting Artist who will hold a free, public lecture at MIAD on Thursday, February 26, 7 p.m.*

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Tatiana Parceró (Mexico) resides in Buenos Aires – Parceró’s work directly addresses issues of her identity, often juxtaposing these investigations with photographic images of her own body. The exhibition shows mixed-media photographs from her “Invento” (Invention) series as well as some of her new work.

Rafael Francisco Salas (U.S.), resides in Ripon, Wisconsin – The only U.S.-born artist in the exhibition, Salas’ innovative work grapples with many of the same issues as those of the other four artists – a diverse personal identity that does not fit comfortably in any one national or ethnic paradigm. Salas exhibits recent works of his own uniquely personal approach to painting.

According to Lawson, “The artists’ quest for personal cultural identity has become an integral component of a global dialog on the nature of art and the role of the artist in our contemporary, interconnected world. The work also represents a subject that could be about anyone anywhere in our world who has relocated, or, for any reason, has had to find a deeper connection to cultural identity.”

Personal Culture: New Art from Latin Americans is the fourth in the Culture in Transition series inaugurated by Lawson in 2006 to explore the rapidly changing nature of our global culture. It is supported in part by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s Mary L. Nohl Fund and the Wisconsin Arts Board.

An Artist Talk and Reception will be held Tuesday, February 24, 7 p.m. Additional information to follow.

High-resolution images and artist statements/bios available at <http://sites.miad.edu/media/Personalculture/>
User and password: media

MIAD is a degree-granting college where individuals discover and realize their creative potential. Founded in 1974 as Wisconsin's only independent college of art and design, it enrolls 675 talented students from across the country who are taught by artists and designers recognized regionally and nationally for their professional and educational accomplishments. Its unique academic approach blends curricular and extracurricular experiences, a community service course requirement, and liberal studies in 11 majors toward the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. With 80% of its 2,800 graduates living and working in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital “brain gain” to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.