



The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

Oswaldo Ramirez Castillo

Independent Curator's Selection

November 16 - December 9, 2006



Commentary by Zachari Logan

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Artist Catalog, 'Osvaldo Ramirez Castillo - Headbones Gallery, The Drawers '
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Oswaldo Ramirez Castillo by Zachari Logan

Inde-Picks (Independent Curator's Selection)

With a sensuous and menacing propinquity, the work of Oswaldo Ramirez Castillo at once arrests, pulling the viewer into a nightmarish story filled with phantasmagoric monsters and iconic images of popular, political and religious figures, elicited through a sequence of fragmented memories. In a way cinematic, reminiscent of Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil*, these drawings also invoke references to both Francisco Goya's *Disasters of War* etchings and his *Black Paintings* along with other historic political works, such as, Theodore Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa*. Like the works of these great artists, Castillo draws on themes of psychosis, suffering and mortality in states of flux, illustrated on paper as personal and collective recountings.

Castillo's Drawings are consummately drafted, unflinchingly visceral sites of personal identity and history, a history lived defiant of sterile versions that have been politically endorsed. Each character has been hauntingly realized, a part of the narrative whether in a state of grotesque majesty or tragic subjection adding to the creation of a mythic landscape. The dissemination of chaos in these drawings exposes the clumsiness and utter depravity with which lived experiences intersect and inform the world around us. The myriad of creatures and mutations of bodies both trussed and in a state of violent domination transfix a notion of evolution wrought out of pain and loss. These masterfully constructed renderings act as psychic stage-sets, sites of confrontation with the past, and are brave acts of remembering.

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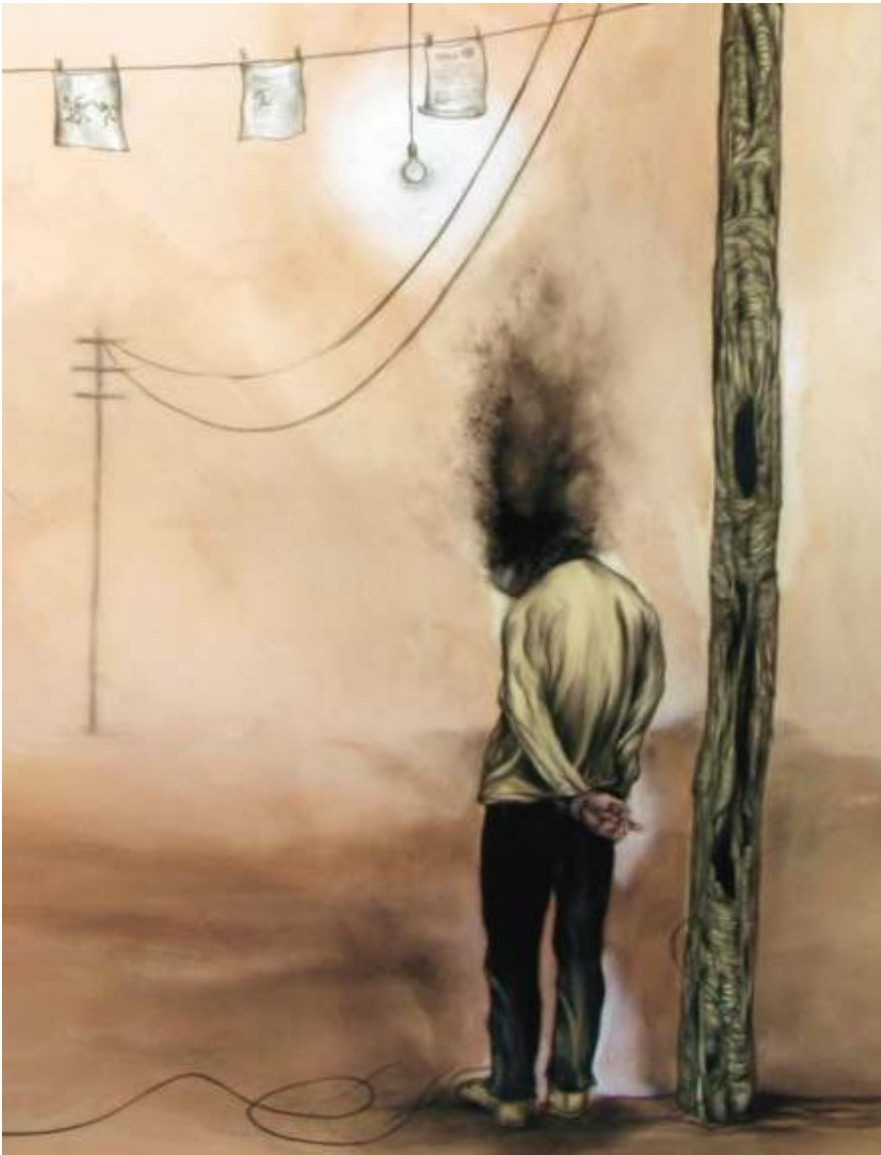
Nationalissimo, from the Carnivalissimo series
Mylar drawing
36x48 inches
2006



Nationalissimo (detail)



From the Carnivalissimo series
Mylar drawing
36x48 inches
2006



From the Carnalissimo series (detail)



Paramilitary's Ball, from the Carnivalissimo series
Mylar drawing
36x48 inches
2006



Paramilitary's Ball (detail)



Galivan, from the Carnivalissimo series
Mylar drawing
36x48 inches
2006



Discovery Of Shoes
Mylar drawing
32x39 inches
2006



Discovery Of Shoes (detail)



El Mozote Exodus
Mylar drawing
36x48 inches
2005



Shipwreck In Jacuapa
Mylar drawing
25x34 inches
2005

Oswaldo Ramirez Castillo

Education

2004-present

Master Degree of Fine Arts, Concordia University.

1997-2001

Ontario college of Art and Design. Major in Printmaking

Awards/Grants

2006 Vermont Studio Center partial fellowship grant. Johnson, U.S.A.

2006 Centre Interuniversitaire des Arts Mediatiques Travel Grant. Field research in El Salvador. Montreal.

2005 Ontario Arts Council Production Grant, emerging level

2005 Toronto Arts Council Production Grant, emerging level.

2005 Centre Interuniversitaire des Arts Mediatiques Production Grant. Film project in El Salvador. Montreal.

2005 Honorable mention, "LatinoAmerica Exhibition". Toronto, Canada.

2004 J.A. deSeve Entrance Scholarship, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.

2004 Ontario Arts Council Grant to The Latino Canadian Cultural Association for The "Ebb and Flow" group exhibition. Toronto, Canada.

2004 The 5th Annual Drawing Exhibition, 2nd Prize, John B. Aird Gallery. Toronto, Canada.

2003 A Space Windows Gallery award. Toronto, Canada.

2002 StudiosLivan International print award. Toronto, Canada.

2001 Open Studio Printmaking award

2001 Printmaking award, 1st Prize, OCAD. Toronto, Canada.

2000 General Printmaking Award. OCAD. Toronto, Canada.

2000 The Duncan McPherson Award in Drawing and Painting. OCAD, Toronto, Canada.

1999 Lithography Award. OCAD. Toronto, Canada.

Residencies

2006 INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY ART RESIDENCY- In conjunction with the Loznica Cultural Center and the Belgrade School of Fine Arts. (July) TRISC, SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO.

2004 GRAFF- Centre de Conception Graphique-Insertion Project- (June to August) MONTREAL, CANADA.

L'ATELIER DE L'ILE-Creation Project- (May)VAL- DAVID, CANADA.

Selected Exhibitions

- 2006 "Thinking through silence." Site specific installation project in collaboration with Concordia's MFA students. Montreal, Canada.
Headbones Gallery. Group exhibition. Toronto, Canada.
Limner Gallery. "Strange Figurations" group exhibition. New York. U.S.A.
Trisc Cultural Heritage Site. Multimedia art residency exhibition. Trisc. Serbia and Montenegro.
John B. Aird Gallery. "The Print Show." Toronto, Canada. (juried)
La Maison de la Culture Villeray. 3e Biennale d'estampes grand format "Voir grand" group exhibition. Montreal, Canada. (juried)
The 5th Egyptian International Print Triennale. Exhibitions in Cairo and Alexandria. Egypt. (juried)
Etobicoke Civic Centre Art Gallery. "3rd LatinoAmerica" group exhibition. Toronto, Canada. (juried)
Atelier Circulaire Gallery. MFA student group show. Featuring printmaking work. Montreal, Canada,
The 7th Annual Drawing Exhibition. John B. Aird Gallery. Toronto, Canada. (juried)
- 2005 SKOL galley, short video projects night. Montreal, Canada.
L.A. gallery. Group exhibition. San Salvador, El Salvador.
Centro Cultural de España. "Adapes" group exhibition. San Salvador, El Salvador.
Etobicoke Civic Centre Art Gallery. "2nd LatinoAmerica" group exhibition. Toronto, Canada.
The 6th Annual Drawing Exhibition. John B. Aird Gallery. Toronto, Canada. (juried)
- 2004 Galerie les Nouveaux. Barbares. Symposium d'art sur papier de Montreal exhibition, Montreal, Canada. (juried)
Real Time Gallery at the Distillery District, "Salvadorian night" art exhibition, group show. Toronto, Canada.
Gallery 1313, Latin- Canadian Cultural Association, group show, Toronto, Canada.
Etobicoke Civic Centre Art Gallery, "LatinoAmerica", Toronto, Canada.
Kabat and Wrobel Gallery, "Relatos", two man show, Toronto, Canada.
The 5th Annual Drawing Exhibition. John B. Aird Gallery. Toronto, Canada. (juried)
The 11th International Print and Drawing Biennale Exhibition. Taiwan, R.O.C.
- 2003 A Space Gallery, Annual group members show. Toronto, Canada.
The Great Hall, Salvador Allende Festival for Peace show. Toronto, Canada.
The 4th International Triennale of Graphic Art Exhibition. Bitola, Macedonia. (juried)
Timothy Eaton Memorial, Open Studio 100 Prints show, Toronto, Canada.
Gallery 1313, "La Trinchera Collective" group show, Toronto, Canada.
- 2002 Acadia Gallery, "La Trinchera Collective" group show, Toronto, Canada.
Kabat and Wrobel Galley, " Latin American Art", Toronto, Canada.

- The 22nd MiniPrint International Exhibition, Cadaques, Spain. (juried)
 L'arte gallery, Group Show, Toronto, Canada.
- Acadia Gallery, "La Trinchera Collective", group Show, Toronto, Canada.
- 2001 Casa de las Americas National Gallery, "Premio La Joven Estampa", La Habana, Cuba. (juried)
 Hart House, University of Toronto, Fundraiser event, Toronto, Canada.
 Wagner and Rosebaum Gallery, Group Show, Toronto, Canada.
 Art System Galley, "Contemporary Printmaking" group show, Toronto, Canada,
 Soho20 Gallery, "Works on Paper" International Exhibition, New York, USA, (juried)
 OCAD Atrium Gallery. "OCAD/OCA" student group show. Toronto, Canada.
 Belleville Library Gallery, recent works from OCAD printmaking, Belleville, Canada.
 OCAD Atrium Gallery. Latin America Artists Collective Annual Exhibition. Toronto, Canada.
- 2000 OCAD Atrium Gallery, Latin American Artists Collective Annual Exhibiton. Toronto, Canada.
 Ranch Relaxo Restaurant, El Salvador Earthquake Relief Fundraiser Art Show. Toronto, Canada.
- 1999 Belleville Library Gallery, recent works from OCAD printmaking, Belleville, Canada.
 OCAD Atrium Gallery, Latin American Artists Collective Annual Exhibition, Toronto, Canada.
- 1998 OCAD Atrium Gallery, Latin American Artists Collective Annual exhibiton. Toronto,

Publications/reviews

- 2005 "Adapes" group show catalogue. El Salvador.
 "The Woodcut artist's handbook" by George Walker. Canada.
- 2004 Interview with "Le Delit". McGill University Francophone student Journal. Mptreal, Canada.
 Exhibition review for the two man show "Relatos" in "La Prensa Grafica". (El Salvador's daily newspaper). El Salvador.
 Interview with TeleLatino Network. Toronto. Canada.
- 2003 The 11th International Print and Drawing Biennial Catalogue. Taiwan. R. O. C.
 The 4th International Triennial of Graphic Art Catalogue. Macedonia.

Excerpts From the Artist's Statement

The act of remembering is a process of performing memory work on the past. This activation of memory also invokes the function of the artist as storyteller. As a result, this body of work highlights a critical narrative on the role of personal memory through storytelling inside a historical setting.

This visual dissertation focuses on the visceral states of memory growing up in El Salvador during the long civil war years in the 1980's. The impact of violence on the collective consciousness has produced a series of testimonies and reflections on the past.

In my art practice the act of remembering takes place within a historical milieu where an allegorical world of personal iconography is articulated through large format drawings and printmaking techniques. Using the human body as both symbol and site of trauma, a critical exploration of its various transformations is emphasized through the process of remembering.

An amalgamation of visual storytelling comprised of El Salvador's popular myths, religious customs, as well as political ideologies, historical events and personal narratives give rise to issues of nationality, subjectivity and cultural identity.

Oswaldo Ramirez Castillo

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