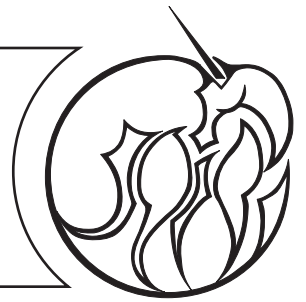


{ the avant-garde }

Katherine N. Crowley Fine Art & Design



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER VOLUME VII No. 9 SEPTEMBER 2013

{the pizzuti collection}



On September 7th the Pizzuti Collection opened its doors in an historic building in the Short North Arts District, Columbus, Ohio. The Pizzuti Collection presents temporary exhibitions of contemporary art from the collection of Ron and Ann Pizzuti, along with a number of programs and events including lectures, artist talks and educational projects. The Inaugural Exhibition includes three presentations of work: *Looking Back*, *Looking Forward* and *Cuban Forever*.

Looking Back tells the story of how the Pizzuti Collection began. Karel Appel's *Circus People* was Ron's first purchase. Paid for in installments, the lithograph was purchased from the Pace Gallery, a branch of the seminal New York gallery which brought leading artists to Columbus. During a trip to Paris, Ron came upon Frank Stella's work which inspired him to conduct additional research, thus illustrating how he balances reading with seeing. Over the years the scope of the collection has grown to include works by Louise Nevelson, Jean Debuffet, Richard Tuttle, Gerhard Richter, Ai Weiwei and Ron Arad.



Looking Forward focuses on the next generation of emerging artists from around the globe. Guatemalan artist Dario Escobar's *Obverse and Reverse* plays with the rise in popularity of soccer worldwide, surpassing religion as a unifying cultural phenomenon. The expansive nature of the installation mimics the duplication of cells in nature. Paired with a table and chair inspired by nature and realized in aluminum by Andrea Salvetti, this aspect of the exhibition combines fields of design and high art. Ori Gersht's video *The Forest* reflects the balance of beauty and destruction. The film was shot near Kosov in Ukraine where the artist's family and other Jews were subjected to horrific atrocities during World War II. His work from the collection and beyond will be the subject of a forthcoming exhibition at the Pizzuti Collection. *Flags, Maps and Politics* in the 1st floor main gallery is a playful selection of works by contemporary artists that represent the diversity of approach, material and subject. Politics and other hot issues are not avoided.



Cuban Forever features the diverse, rich, beautiful and compelling contemporary art of Cuba. Ron is fortunate to have had the opportunity to travel to Havana, where he met with artists in their studios, visited the museums and experienced the Cuban art world. Like most, he is taken with the natural beauty of the island and the historic charm of the city. The artists draw on a wide variety of styles influenced by ancestral roots that reach back to Western Europe, Africa and Asia. These influences, along with a rigorous education, combine to create a point of view that is individual and distinctive. While politics are unavoidable in Cuba, they are not the only focus. History is reexamined, untold stories are illuminated, and complex and challenging issues revealed. The monumental photographs of Michael Eastman portray the disintegrating historic beauty of Havana. Duvier Del Dago's *Yamaha GP* is a study in 2- and 3-dimensions under blacklight. Glenda Leon's conceptual works on paper address the intersection of visible and invisible, sound and silence.

Source: The Pizzuti Collection <http://www.pizzuticollection.com>

From the top: *Lenguaje*, by Adonis Flores, Fuji Crystal Chromogenic Archival C-Print, 2005; *Stacked Smoke*, by Teresita Fernandez, plexiglass cubes, 2005; *Kosmaj Toy*, by Los Carpinteros, wood, metal, LEGO® bricks, 2012. Photos by Alan Geho, Ralphoto Studio, courtesy of The Pizzuti Collection.

{you can't get there from here: a brief history of cuba}

by Katherine N. Crowley

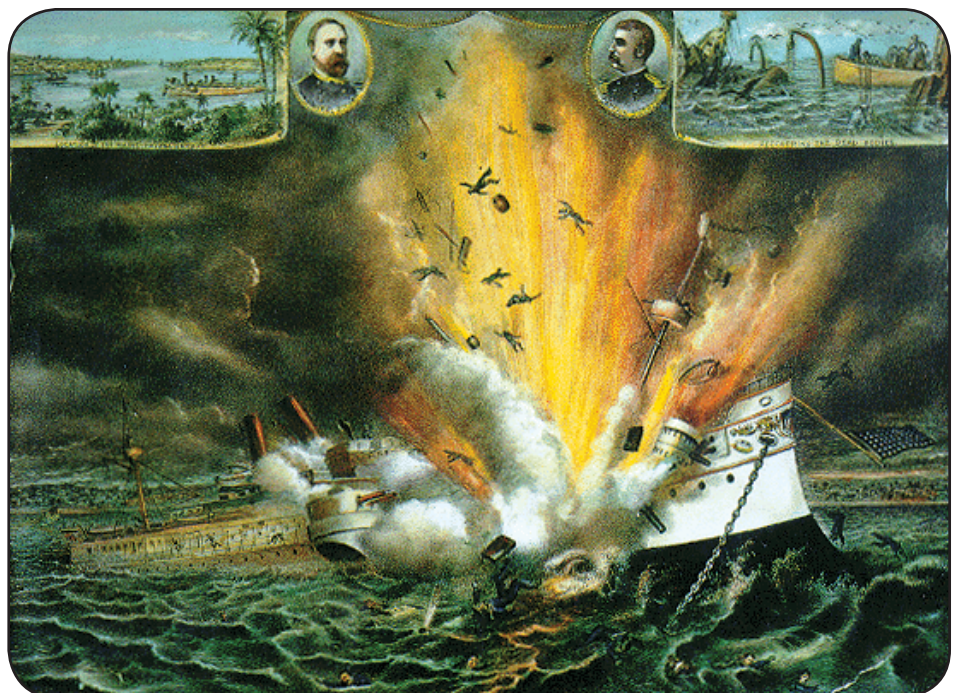
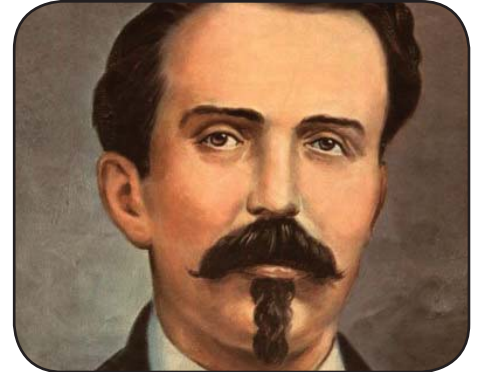
I have always enjoyed history as a subject but the problem with learning about history is that we keep making more of it. In school we spent a significant amount of time learning about the gritty melodrama of the American Civil War. By the time spring rolled around the teacher would realize we needed to steam roll our way through lessons about World War's I and II if we were going to pack the history of western civilization into our minds before summer break. Subsequently I don't know all that much about what happened between the 1950s and when my own memory of significant events began to kick in. My knowledge of Cuba is somewhat limited. I do know that Cuba is an island 90 miles south of Florida, that Ricky Ricardo is from there, and that there is a lot of hype about Cuban cigars. Well, I probably know a little more than that, but this article isn't really about me. Let's learn about Cuba.

Though the island was inhabited by native peoples, Cuba was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1492 and claimed for the Kingdom of Spain. During the colonial era the entire native population was wiped out by diseases like smallpox and measles primarily due to a lack of natural resistance. Settlers raised cattle, sugarcane and tobacco. When the native population died out, African slaves were imported to work the plantations and ranches.

Cuba remained a Spanish colony for over four centuries despite multiple campaigns for independence. In 1868, sugar planter Carlos Manuel de Céspedes promised freedom to any slaves that assisted in the revolt that became the *Ten Years War*. In 1892, José Martí founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party, recording his views in the *Manifiesto of Montecristi*. He was killed during the *Battle of Dos Rios* in 1895, and is regarded as Cuba's national hero. The Spanish army responded by herding the rural

population into "reconcentrados" - concentration camps where so many civilians died of disease and starvation that American and European nations began to protest Spain's conduct. The United States mobilized the battleship U.S.S. Maine to protect its interests. On February 15, 1898, the Maine exploded in Havana Harbor, sparking the Spanish-American War. The war, fought in the Caribbean and the Philippines, resulted in Spain ceding control of Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam to the U.S. In 1902, Cuba was granted independence from the United States.

A combination of political corruption, tourist boom, financial downfall and street violence followed. In 1933, Fulgencio Batista led the *Sergeants' Revolt* overthrowing the government and seizing power through puppet regime and later presidency. A new constitution was adopted in 1940. Not able to be re-elected, Batista left office in 1944. Two civilian elected politicians followed and in 1953, Batista - on the ballot for president again - seized control in a bloodless coup, 3 months before elections.



From the top: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, José Martí, illustration of the U.S.S. Maine explosion in Havana Harbour

History of Cuba Continued from Page 2

In 1959, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara's *26th of July Movement* overthrew Batista and drove the dictator into exile after a 2-year campaign. Castro installed himself as president and declared Cuba a socialist state. Although he promised a return to constitutional rule and democratic elections, Castro used the military to repress his opponents. In April of 1961, the U.S. staged the *Bay of Pigs Invasion*, an operation organized by the CIA to train and fund Cuban exiles to overthrow the Castro government. The invasion was a failure and embarrassment to the United States that spurred Castro to strengthen ties with the Soviet Union. To prevent future threats, Castro and Soviet President Nikita Krushchev agreed to place nuclear missiles in Cuba. This led to a 13-day standoff between the U.S., Cuba and the Soviet Union known as the *Cuban Missile Crisis*. The U.S. staged a blockade preventing weapons from being delivered to Cuba. While negotiations ensued, Soviet ships tried to run the blockade and an American U-2 plane was shot down. President Kennedy and U.N. Secretary-General Thant reached a disarmament agreement with Krushchev. The U.S. publicly declared to never attempt another invasion of Cuba but imposed sanctions on the country that have yet to be lifted.

In the 1970s, Cuba assisted in several Soviet-supported wars in Africa; the country endured an on-again, off-again relationship with the Organization of American States; and suffered socioeconomic strife. The collapse of the Soviet Union gave way to food shortages and became known as the *Special Period* in Cuban history. Castro turned to other communist nations for support such as China, Venezuela, and Bolivia. In 2003, the government imprisoned a large number of civil activists in an effort known as the *Black Spring*. In 2008, following health concerns,



Fidel Castro resigned as President of Cuba. His brother Raúl was elected president and promised to lift some of the restrictions imposed on the Cuban people. Since taking office he has overhauled the salary structure of state-run companies, allowed the purchase of previously prohibited small appliances by citizens, and has encouraged foreign investment and agrarian reforms. He intends to step down in 2018.

Cuban culture is a melting pot of Spanish, African and Caribbean traditions. The government provides free education and health care and has established rigorous sports, ballet and music programs. The nation's tumultuous history has led to much political controversy. Despite difficult political relations, Cuba and the United States do allow artists and musicians to travel between the



two countries to promote cultural understanding. In this way the Pizzuti Collection was able to build its current exhibit, *Cuban Forever*.

"Coming from the point of view of a passionate art collector, the Pizzuti Collection seeks to present art by underrepresented voices from around the globe with work that transcend, elevates the mind and expresses freedoms."



My sister Margarita's debut party was held in an elegant stage set in the courtyard of the Havana Yacht Club. I remember hanging out by the bar and talking with friends about Fidel Castro. Politicians were crooks, we all agreed, and if Fidel ever toppled Batista, he would turn out like all the rest. Three years later, 99% of the membership of the Havana Yacht Club, including my family, found themselves living in Miami in drastically reduced circumstances.

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-Tony Mendoza



From the top: *Untitled*, by Tony Mendoza, toned silver gelatin print, The Pizzuti Collection; *Heroes Before the Last Vision*, detail, by Raúl Cordero, oil and polyester resin on canvas, 2009. Photos by Alan Geho, Ralphoto Studio, courtesy of The Pizzuti Collection.

On September 7th I attended an artist panel held by The Pizzuti Collection featuring three artists from its *Cuban Forever* exhibit. I chronicled the experience via Twitter @knc_fineartdsgr.

Photographer Tony Mendoza left Cuba at age 18 but he feels that his life was formed there and that he is Cuban forever. His time in Cuba formed him as an artist. He describes Cuban culture as one of humorists and story tellers. Mr. Mendoza is a relative of Antonio Mendoza, a wealthy landowner who became mayor of Havana the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He joked that Antonio was the last successful member of the Mendoza family. Eight branches of the family still hold reunions. Mendoza moved to the U.S. in 1960 and studied architecture in Boston. He began taking pictures at age 9. His first adult project was to photograph his family. He later shot everything around his home. Mr. Mendoza moved to New York because he felt Boston's art scene was a bit hampered with the Big Apple so close by. He took pictures of his roommate's cat and compiled a book of the photographs but was told to include text to entice publishers. Mr. Mendoza's format became a single black and white image per page with a caption that exudes his signature Cuban humor. Mendoza has since published the photography books *Memoir*, *Stories* and most recently a novel called *A Cuban Summer*. Mr. Mendoza shared stories of his impetuous, girl-crazy youth and kept the audience laughing with slides of his accompanying photos. When asked about returning to Cuba, Mr. Mendoza said that it is very different but that the culture has not changed, the Cuban people have not changed. They are still the family-oriented, funny, storytellers he remembers from his youth.

Raúl Cordero was the second artist to speak. He is primarily a painter, who gathers material from historic and contemporary sources. Mr. Cordero studied at la Academia San Alejandro; el Instituto Superior de Diseño en La Habana, Cuba; and in the Graphic Media Development Centre and the Rijksakademie Van Beeldende Kunsten, The Netherlands. Cordero has a soft painterly approach but makes use of hard photographic and digital elements to contrast traditional media. He became interested in Dutch and Flemish painting and has focused much of his work on Rembrandt. Mr. Cordero created a series of 9 paintings referencing Rembrandt's *Woman Bathing in a Stream*. When combined 3x3, the paintings create a new composition. He began a painting series referencing a favorite landscape from the National Gallery London combined with images of The Mambo King of Mexico. To Cordero the combined imagery represents rejection. Mr. Cordero paints diptychs of similar images with some small shift between them, like his use of color. Cordero created a series of paintings discussing the validity of art as a commodity in a humorous way. For these, he juxtaposes type and image. Mr. Cordero's paintings are soft in both brushstroke and color palette. Cordero's soft paintings often feature repetitive horizontal lines that resemble text in a newspaper column. Humorous text, repetitive imagery, softly executed subjects, and the layering of graphic inspired images characterize Mr. Cordero's work.

Sculptor Alexandre Arrecha spoke last. His *Orange Tree* in the Pizzuti Collection sculpture garden, is a local favorite. Mr. Arrecha shared and discussed slides of several of his works. Mr. Arrecha's work is tongue in cheek but addresses contemporary issues like politics and the economy. His *Stadium*, is a sculpture of stadium seats with video of museum patrons entering the building displayed on TVs in the vomes. Mr. Arrecha's *Mississippi River* sculpture is made of wood recovered from the river itself. The wood planks are arranged as levees that form an outline of the river. *Dust*, is a glass heavy bag filled with dust and rubbish from a given location. One is included



in the Pizzuti Collection. The only way to access the dust is to break the bag. *Dust*, like much of Arrecha's work, represents a circle of life concept. We come from dust and unto dust we shall return. One of Mr. Arrecha's sculptures is a skyscraper seated on a chair. Does the chair contain the building or the building contain the chair? Arrecha's *Economy* features house-shaped metal panels mounted on a screw. The houses expand and contract along the screw based on fluctuations in the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Mr. Arrecha was invited to create a work in Times Square. For this project he created a video of a wrecking ball bouncing off the Nasdaq Building. Mr. Arrecha combined toy tops and famous Cuban buildings for the Venice Biennial. Arrecha was later invited to display the Bacardi Building Top in the lobby of the Bacardi Building that inspired it. Arrecha's toy top sculptures represent rebirth from failure, a commentary on the economy. One of Mr. Arrecha's humorous sculptures is a boom box that looks like a giant cassette tape. Arrecha produced a video of himself attacking himself. It features one self with a traditional Cuban machete, and the other self waiting around the corner with a gun. A study on the history of violence in the region. *Orange Tree*, is a metal tree with a basketball hoop growing from each branch. Several basketballs are glued to the ground beneath as a comment on the concept of democracy. Mr. Arrecha discussed how *Orange Tree* relates to the democratic process. *Orange Tree* looks like a game that everyone can play, but in reality no one can because the balls are glued to the ground. The concept of democracy is intended to be "of the people, by the people and for the people", but frequently it seems as if the people cannot participate in the democratic process. Mr. Arrecha showed a series of models of Cuban bridges that no longer exist, mounted to a wall. Mr. Arrecha created a series of playful sculptures along Park Avenue featuring area skyscrapers. The Park Avenue project acts as a visual pun: circular buildings devour themselves, and appear as spinning tops; Arrecha's Flat Iron Building is actually flat, and his Empire State Building morphs into the Pentagon; the Courthouse takes on the form of a traffic barrier. New York red tape prevented Mr. Arrecha from actually blocking traffic with the piece, a humorous twist on the humour of the piece.

The *Cuban Forever* lecture featured three artists that call the same island nation home. Three artists with very different viewpoints and artistic approaches. Three interpretations of the very same place.

Left: *Orange Tree*, by Alexandre Arrecha, lacquered aluminum, metal hoops, basketballs, 2003-2010. Photo by Alan Geho, Ralphoto Studio, courtesy of The Pizzuti Collection.

{ 2 wheels + motor: a fine art exhibition }

The Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum
13515 Yarmouth Drive
Pickerington, Ohio 43147

<http://www.motorcyclmuseum.org>



Above right: *Crusin'*, by Katherine N. Crowley, oil on canvas, 2013. Currently on view at the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum.

{all around the town}

AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum

(<http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org>)

"2 Wheels + Motor", Ongoing

The Columbus Cultural Arts Center

(<http://www.culturalartscenteronline.org>)

"You Call That Art?", Oct. 5-Nov. 9

"Opening", Oct. 5; "Collecting Art 101", Oct. 12; "1000 Words/1000 Moves", Oct. 19; "The Impact of the Armory Show on American Art", Oct. 26

The Columbus Museum of Art (<http://www.columbusmuseum.org>)

"George Bellows", Aug. 23-Jan. 24

Dublin Arts Council (<http://www.dublinarts.org>)

"Shifting Perspectives 2013", Sept. 24-Nov. 8

McConnell Arts Center (<http://www.mcconnellarts.org>)

"Westbridge Camera Club: Images of Autumn", Sept. 12-Nov. 3

"Interspecies Dialogue", Aug. 27-Nov. 3

OSU Urban Arts Space (<http://www.uas.osu.edu>)

"Painting Tableau Stage", Sept. 24-Nov. 14

"ADDITION(S): 3+3=6 New Faculty in the Department of Art", Sept. 28-Nov. 14

Ohio Historical Society (<http://www.ohiohistory.org>)

"1950s Building the American Dream", Ongoing

"Faces of Appalachia: Photographs by Albert J. Ewing", January-December 2013

The Riffe Gallery (<http://www.oac.state.oh.us/riffe/>)

"The Modern Table: Ohio Furniture Designers", Nov. 7-Jan. 12

The Wexner Center (<http://www.wexarts.org>)

"Blues for Smoke", Sept. 21-Dec. 29

{performing arts}

BalletMet Columbus (<http://www.balletmet.org>)

"Swan Lake", Oct. 18-20, Ohio Theater

CAPA (<http://www.capa.com>)

"Tango Fire", Oct. 18, Ohio Theater

CATCO (<http://www.catoc.org>)

"Fully Committed", Nov. 6-24, Riffe Center Studio Two

Columbus Symphony Orchestra

(<http://www.columbussymphony.com>) Ohio Theater

"Mahler's Resurrection", Oct. 5

"Rachmaninoff & Brahms", Oct. 11-12

"Suites & Songs", Oct. 18-20

Shadowbox (<http://www.shadowboxlive.org>)

"Madness and Lust", Oct. 17-Nov. 14, Stage 2

{and beyond}

The Akron Art Museum (<http://www.akronartmuseum.org>)

"40 Years of Julian Stanczak", Through November 3

"Real/Surreal", Through November 3

The Museum of Fine Arts Boston (<http://www.mfa.org>)

"Hippie Chic", Through Nov. 11

"She Who Tells a Story: Women Photographers from Iran & the Arab World", Through Jan. 12

ICA Boston (<http://www.icaboston.org>)

"Steve Locke: There is No One Left to Blame", Through Oct. 27

"Mary Reid Kelley", Through Oct. 27

The Cincinnati Art Museum (<http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org>)

"What's New: Fashion & Contemporary Craft", Through Jan. 19

The Cleveland Museum of Art (<http://www.clevelandart.org>)

"Less Is More: Minimal Prints", Through Oct. 20

The Art Institute of Chicago (<http://www.artic.edu>)

"Shomei Tomatsu: Island Life", Through Jan. 5

"Tomaki Suzuki", Through Oct. 20

Dayton Art Institute (<http://www.daytonartinstitute.org>)

"A Buckeye Abroad: Frank Wilcox, Paris 1910-1926", Through Jan. 5

"Reinvention Portraits", Through Oct. 27

Detroit Institute of Art (<http://www.dia.org>)

"Watch Me Move: The Animation Show", Through Jan. 5

Indianapolis Museum of Art (<http://www.imamuseum.org>)

"Impressed: Modern Japanese Prints", Through January 2014

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (<http://www.lacma.org>)

"Under the Mexican Sky: Gabriel Figueroa", Through Feb. 2

Minneapolis Institute of Art (<http://www.artsmia.org>)

"The World at Work: Images of Labor", Through Nov. 10

Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC (<http://www.metmuseum.org>)

"Janet Cardiff: The Forty Part Motet", Through Dec. 8

Museum of Modern Art, New York (<http://www.moma.org>)

"Magritte: The Mystery of the Ordinary", Through Jan 12

Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (<http://www.cmoa.org>)

"2013 Carnegie International", Oct. 5-Mar. 15

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (<http://www.sfmoma.org>)

"Beyond Belief: 100 Years of the Spiritual in Modern Art" at the Contemporary Jewish Museum, Through Oct. 27

The Toledo Museum of Art (<http://www.toledomuseum.org>)

"Perry's Victory: The Battle of Lake Erie", Through Nov. 10

The National Gallery of Art, Wash. D.C. (<http://www.nga.gov>)

"Ellsworth Kelly: Colored Paper Images", Through Dec. 1

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