EN FOCO | IN FOCUS
SELECTED WORKS FROM THE EN FOCO PERMANENT COLLECTION

Curated by Elizabeth Ferrer

On view March 14 - May 16, 2012

AMA | ART MUSEUM of the AMERICAS
F STREET PHOTO GALLERY
1889 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Hours: MON-FRI | 9AM - 5PM

Opening Reception + Gallery Talk
Wednesday, March 14 at 6PM

AMA | Art Museum of the Americas of the Organization of American States announces En Foco, an exhibition of selected works from the En Foco collection of works by photographers of Latin American, African, Asian, and Native American heritage. The exhibition’s multicultural discourse on racial, gender, and personal identity and issues of human rights are presented at the OAS | AMA F Street Gallery as a critical artistic component to the Organization’s ongoing work to protect human and civil rights in the American hemisphere and promote diplomacy among its diverse member States.

The earliest works in the exhibition, dating to the 1970s and ‘80s, reflect the documentary impulse that characterized photographic work produced during and in the aftermath of the civil rights era. In contrast to photographic essays of the period exposing inner-city decay, these are images by people who lived in and understood the rhythms of life in these neighborhoods. Cultural representation by outsiders became self-representation, as the camera became a potent means of political and self-expression.

The second part of the exhibition traces En Foco’s mission, as it broadened its scope beyond Latino photographers.
The organization reflected the multicultural discourse of the 1990s. Numerous photographers of this decade (and increasingly visual artists drawn to photography as a tool) deployed the medium to examine identity (racial, ethnic, sexual, gender-based), otherness, and the social and cultural contexts that shape perspectives on the self.

The final part of this exhibition looks at En Foco from 2000 to the present day. The youngest photographers are reflective of the contemporary art scene’s global landscape. These photographers approach photography with great freedom, drawing from multiple photographic traditions, cultural histories, and creative modes. Nevertheless, for all of these photographers, the printed image remains profoundly valued for its endless capacity to document, communicate, exhort, and express the continuing flux of life.

This exhibition promotes a parallel history of photography by bringing together artists and images largely absent from mainstream photography. The show is comprised of 56 striking prints by 48 contemporary artists of 21 differing ethnicities/nationalities. The work dates from the 1970s to the present day, and offers a unique look at the missing history of photographers who used the camera to document their neighborhoods in the ‘70s and ‘80s, pressed for the inclusion of multicultural voices in artistic, political and media spheres in the ‘90s and those whom increasingly comment on both local and universal themes using the virtual realm in the present.

En Foco is curated by Elizabeth Ferrer is Director of Contemporary Art at BRIC Arts|Media|Bklyn, Brooklyn, NY. She is also a writer and curator specializing in Mexican and Latino photography. More more information on En Foco, visit enfoco.org and for more information about AMA visit AMAmuseum.org

THE ARTISTS
ADÁL
SAMA ALSHAIBI
LOUIS CARLOS BERNAL
TERRY BODDIE
VALDIR CRUZ
ANA DE ORBEGOSO
LOLA FLASH
MURIEL HASBUN
NITZA LUNA
HECTOR MÉNDEZ CARATINI
ANNU PALAKUNNATHU MATTHEW
TONY MENDOZA
PIPO NGUYEN-DUY
SOPHIE RIVERA
JANE TAM
KATHY VARGAS
JAISHRI ABICHANDANI
DON GREGORIO ANTÓN
DAWOUDE BEY
SAMANTHA BOX
GERALD CYRUS
LUIS DELGADO
RICKY FLORES
GERMÁN HERRERA
GEORGE MALAVE
STEPHEN MARC
LARRY MCNEIL
NÉSTOR MILLÁN
DULCE PINZÓN
JUAN SÁNCHEZ
HANK WILLIS THOMAS
VÍCTOR VÁZQUEZ
MAX AGUILERA HELLWEG
CHUY BENITEZ
CHARLES BIASINY-RIVERA
ROGER CABÁN
PHIL DANTE
DEAN DEMPSEY
MYRA GREENE
KENRO IZU
FRANK X. MÉNDEZ
RANIA MATAR
GROANA MELENDEZ
DELILAH MONTOYA
BONNIE PORTELANCE
KUNIÉ SUGIURA
HONG-AN TRUONG
WENDEL WHITE

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