



AMA

ART MUSEUM of the AMERICAS
ORGANIZATION of AMERICAN STATES

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EN FOCO | IN FOCUS

SELECTED WORKS FROM THE
IN FOCUS 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 photo 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.



© Hank Willis Thomas, *Smokin' Joe Ain't J'mama*, from the series *Unbranded: Reflections in Black from Corporate America 1968-2008, 1978/2006*. Archival pigment print on Canson Infinity Platine Fibre Rag, 16x15.25 in.

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

DAWOUD 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