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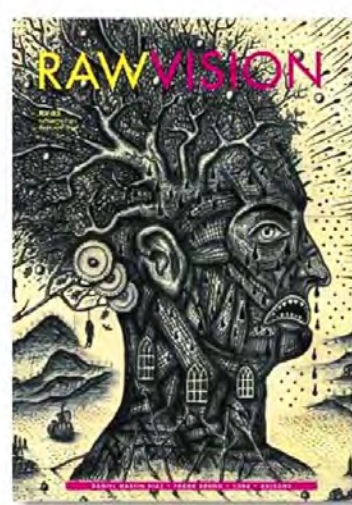
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Riera Studio



Author: Scott Rothstein
The artists affiliated with the Riera Studio are creatively motivated for the most personal reasons. Their styles and sensibilities are diverse, yet all share an intense expressive focus. Until the establishment of the Riera Studio in 2012, these individuals were unknown and often living on the margins of Cuban society. While none have formal academic training, their art is robust, defined and compelling.

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For the first time ever, Art Brut and Outsider Art made by Cuban artists are shown at Raw Vision, the most important international magazine specialized in art made by untrained, unschooled and uninfluenced artists of all over the world. The author of this article, the artist and writer Scott Rothstein (USA), wrote a great review about the work that RIERA STUDIO and its own project: Art Brut Project Cuba, are doing as the only Cuban initiative (and one of the very few in the whole Latin America region) that promotes Art Brut and Outsider Art.

Thanks to Scott Rothstein and Raw Vision for giving our artists this possibility.

Read the full article at [Raw Vision #95](#)

Last days on exhibition: The Whispering Silence



The Whispery Silence, an exhibition with drawings by [Federico Garcia Cortizas](#) at RIERA STUDIO | Art Brut Project Cuba until October 6th, 2017.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES IN RIERA STUDIO

María Matienzo Puerto¹

The independent gallery Riera Studio and Art Brut Project Cuba began with the exhibition The Whispering Silence of Federico García Cortizas, a new cycle of personal exhibitions of the artists that conform their catalog.

Samuel Riera, artist, space owner and Federico García Cortizas, the first one to exhibit, they talk for Cubanet on Art Brut, Outsider Art and the society that pour out "the different ones".

Riera has been working for 5 years to create a catalog that puts together artists of all the island and Federico, his whole life, has been drawing landscapes that even the other day were of no value and Riera as a specialist classifies like "psychological landscapes" because they are jungles that only exist in the artist's worries.

"Federico is our best landscape painter, but is still very difficult to be accepted in the commercial circuits. Our artists' work is not yet recognize", says Riera in relation to the Art Brut/Outsider as the new thing that is for many people, "We live an institutionalization within the culture where the incorporation of new processes of art have not been studied or minced by the centers of power, so they do not recognize it".

"I think, I am outsider because I never had any relation with nothing related with this country", Federico defines himself, although Riera assures that is very difficult that an outsider defines himself as such.

Art Brut Project Cuba got to him with "terror", according to Riera, references were very radical, "his neighbors told me that he was an aggressive guy and I realized that it was simply his way to establish social interconnections were complex, a guy without tools to enter into society, and people worries to have as a neighbor a person that lives surrounded of trunks of trees", also is needed to add, that Federico is an artist that does not take part in the social neither political reality, he calls himself a "scapegoat", and he says, "Every time that something had happened, they were saying I was involved". After some years society simply isolated him.

Riera talks on his outsider's condition, "In the case of the outsider artist, many times they do not even know what is to be inside the system, it's not an attitude neither a desire nor a structured form and Federico is one of them.

"I am a very nonconformist guy and maybe I had created that stigma that the people believe that I am a madman", says the artist, but those who know him, know that he's afraid of madness, "the world is full with ignorant people and when they see you in this they think you are with the madmen. I have a lot of friends that are crazy, but I do not see why I have to be mad if I support myself", and he enumerates for how many nominations he has been classified, "When I used to hear rock music I was

an antisocial, a freaky. Now I am no longer antisocial because I got a haircut, but I continue to be a madman. The idea is always to stick to the people a poster of something".

About his nuts friends Riera says, "Federico could belong to a social group of rebellious people, to a subculture. We would have to see in the same exposition his friends with the same ideas, the same projection that evidently they collide because they do not match up themselves with a specific order and less with ours that's so strict"

For Federico, Cuban society is monotonous because here "they all are the same, they all have a pattern to follow and I detest patterns. I like original people. And in the other side are the common people, who are really boring", and for him, the common people are the ones that get dressed equal, have the same haircut, do not read, they do not watch good films, neither hear good music.

He, in some way, is conscious why they brand him as madman. They see you looking at a tree and you are an oddball, Federico says, "because they are unable to observe nature. This country is made out of people like that"

Riera as an art specialist, believes that Federico's work has something of "twisted" because there is no order, neither satisfaction, although silence exist but not passivity, different to what we are used to see in the Cuban landscape painting", he shares other impressions, "for me are also neuronal expressions where the people get lost", and he tells that Federico's last tendency is drawing scenes or characters as part of the branches or the roots that conform his drawings.

The social isolation not only obliged the artist to delay his entrance to public scenes or to share his work with other ones, but also caused him "to be afraid sometimes of having house's blinds open, because you do not know if they are watching you or not, and don't think that I am paranoid, it is that there are a lot of modern equipment that can see you in the dark", this state is increased when he considers that the neighbor, according to himself, he wants to take his apartment away from him, although he does not even have the minor legal possibility to do it. Personal, fictitious, paranoid, delirious stories or not, are the ones that support Federico's work and also of the rest of the artists of the catalog of Art Brut Project Cuba that they will begin to exhibit at Riera Studio in this new cycle and from which the first expression was The Whispering Silence.

¹ The author is a free-lanced journalist and writer. This article, reproduced here with permissions, appeared on her cultural column for the on-line site www.cubanet.com

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RIERA STUDIO is a Cuban space for exhibitions, reflection and artistic dialogue that recognizes and studies the different dynamics of the peripheral development of art and society. Art Brut Project Cuba, created by RIERA STUDIO, is the only Cuban-based initiative that supports and promotes Art Brut and Outsider Art