

## **Abel Jiménez**

Abel Jiménez was born in Oaxaca (Mexico) in 1955. He trained at La Esmeralda School of Arts under the guidance of professors Arturo Estrada and Arnold Belkin.

His work has been shown in most galleries in Mexico City as well as in the United States, France, Argentina, Puerto Rico and Bolivia. Abel's paintings have been seen in collective exhibitions alongside masters such as David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Raúl Anguiano, Francisco Toledo, Feliciano Béjar or José Luis Cuevas. His work also features in private collections in Germany, Brazil, Italy, Spain, Japan, and Poland.

Abel has been recognized as a member of the Mexican Plastic Arts Salon, where he has exhibited his work throughout the years. He is also a member of ARTAC, UNESCO's International Association of Art.

## **Alfonso Martí**

Alfonso Martí, an architect by training, was born in Guadalajara (Mexico) in 1973.

From a very young age Alfonso felt attracted to the arts and, years later, he would choose this path: he studied both music and painting in Rome and Paris

In France he had an exceptional start to his painting career when the Mayor of Paris inaugurated his first solo show, and pop singer and former Dali muse Amanda Lear became one of his collectors.

Nowadays Alfonso lives in San Miguel de Allende (Mexico). His work has been shown in solo and collective exhibitions in Mexico, Miami, Rome and Paris.

Through his art Alfonso seeks to reconcile age-old techniques used by classical painters with contemporary visual synthesis, while seeking to erase the line between art and life.

Alfonso's inquiries as a young artist and his close contact with visual discourse in 20th and 21st century arts lead him not only to reviewing Renaissance and academic masters but also to mixing and re-interpreting their expressive means from a contemporary, Latin American aesthetic viewpoint.

## **Alicia de la Campa**

Alicia de la Campa was born in Havana (Cuba) in 1966 and her artistic training started at a very young age at the Elementary School of Plastic Arts. She graduated from San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in 1985 and went on to obtain a degree in art teaching.

Alicia's work embraces various expressions: painting, drawing, book illustration and engraving. Her work has been shown both in collective and individual exhibitions in galleries and biennales in Havana and Mexico City. Alicia has also been devoted to teaching at both institutions where she studied. Apart from her work as a painter, she has done book and magazine covers in Cuba and Spain.

Her recent oeuvre stems from existential meditation. It also shows a keen eye for the importance of titles. Her peculiar figurative approach begins with a sensuous appreciation of form and, through the enjoyment of execution, her experiments achieve a high degree of mastery of her craft. Alicia's work shows the end result of accepting creativity as her deepest essence as well as her serious and painstaking training.

"I strive to achieve a stunning image –but always pursuing beauty, trying to reach the innermost light and darkness of beings", she states.

## **Claudia Ramos**

Claudia Ramos was born in Mexico City in 1967. She trained in painting, engraving and lithography at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design as well as at the New York Studio School.

Claudia has had solo shows in many museums and galleries in Mexico and also in New York. She has participated in collective exhibitions –like the Festival of Nations at the International House in New York– and done illustrations for various publications, including the covers of two books by Andrés Henestrosa, one of Mexico's most important living writers.

Claudia's plastic expression dares to explore eroticism –that perpetual axis of human unconscious, and does so from her very personal, almost subliminal viewpoint. Her brush depicts anguish, but also hope. She works on the nude body with peculiar approaches and fixes her gaze upon the enigmatic expression of the eyes. We discover in Claudia's canvases a wealth of emotionally charged strokes and textures, full of life and passion.

## **Daniela Manzur**

Born in 1977 in Mexico City, Daniela Manzur trained as a painter from a very young age in several workshops and courses and holds diplomas in Figurative Drawing (Universidad Iberoamericana), Expression of the Human Figure (Cultural Centre of Contemporary Art in Mexico City) as well as Graph and Monotypes (Plastic Arts Workshop at Rufino Tamayo's Studio).

In 2003 Daniela's work was selected for the Fourth International Biennale of Contemporary Art in Florence. It has also been shown in various galleries throughout Mexico.

As described by Nuria Shabot, Daniela's paintings seem never to stand still: the images they show are day-to-day scenes or objects that, due to their everyday presence, we sometimes take for granted. In Daniela Manzur's work, these moments and these things are fixed but not dead; they have been caught but they go on evolving. They are everything but banal: doors opening onto a singular universe which enable us to contact a deeper, more nuanced reality.

## **Daniel Romero**

Daniel Romero was born 1970 in the port city of Veracruz (Mexico) and holds a degree in Visual Arts. His work has been shown in individual and collective exhibitions throughout Mexico and in U.S. galleries (Maryland, Palm Springs, the University of Illinois) as well as in the SOTA Gallery, Hong Kong, the Plaza Gallery in Tokyo, and in other countries (Cuba, El Salvador and Venezuela).

In 1995-1996 he collaborated with Sol Levenson in creating the commemorative mural for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Veracruzana University, financed by the Fulbright Foundation.

Daniel achieves very special textures using an array of refined techniques. His backgrounds always seem concrete walls –reminiscent of times when advertisements were painted directly on such surfaces. His subject matters cover a wide range, from day-to-day life to fairytale images.

## **Edgar Cano**

Edgar Cano was born in 1977 in the town of Isla, Veracruz (Mexico) and holds a degree in Plastic Arts from the Veracruzana University. His work has been shown in over twenty collective exhibitions in Mexico as well as at the Lyndon House Arts Center, in Georgia and the University of Victoria (Canada). Edgar has also worked as an illustrator and theatrical set designer.

Each and every one of Edgar's painting not only show a very precise and almost obsessive technique when drawing the human figure, but at some point it seems as if, mixed with the oils, there were some essence of the painter himself, endowing his figures with unimaginable strength, making them almost alive.

"We, as spectators, are provoked by his work to experiment with emotions, adjectives, diversity of styles and concepts. From sheer aesthetic enjoyment, Edgar Cano leads us through a path of deep reflections on the essence of man" (Josué Martínez).

## **Emmanuel Cruz**

A native of Xalapa (Mexico), Emmanuel Cruz was born in 1980 and holds a degree in Plastic Arts from his hometown university. Recently he also attended a set-design course in Madrid.

His work has been shown individually and in collective exhibitions in Mexico and the United States, in places like the Center of Fine Arts in Chicago and the University of Houston. In 2006 Emmanuel's work was selected among participants from 23 countries for the Rafael Cauduro Americas' Biennale.

Mixing sands, oil, graphite and various other materials, Emmanuel manages to address a very clear message in each and every one of his paintings. It may go from a political statement to a maelstrom of labyrinths and spirals –but in any case, there is no doubt: the artist's intention is not only to catch the spectator's eye, but to elicit the very same feelings he had when creating his piece.

## **Ericka Martinez**

Ericka Martinez, a native of Mexico City, holds a degree in Visual Arts from La Esmeralda National School of Painting and Sculpture. Her work has been shown in various solo exhibitions and over 20 collective shows in important museums in Mexico, such as the Palace of Fine Arts and the Modern Art Museum, as well as in Cuba and Portugal.

During the past decade Ericka worked as an illustrator for many Mexican publishing houses. She has also ventured in TV design creating the signature image of Canal 11, a public TV Network in Mexico.

The artist's use of color and her particular way of depicting the human figure sets her apart from her contemporaries. In Ericka's paintings the spectator can always be surprised with her delicious imagination. If it's an everyday life scene, an opera singer, a flying hen or a praying nun, her brush strokes would always be colorful, cheerful and with a hint of humor.

## **Fabio Alberto Mesa**

Fabio Alberto Mesa was born in Medellín (Colombia) in 1970. After graduating from the Institute of Fine Arts he went on to show his work in collective and solo exhibitions in his country. In 2006 his piece *Doing justice in the morning* won first place in the Professional Category in the Visual Arts Department Salon in Medellín.

Fabio Alberto is interested in constructing a better world. He pictures himself as a seeker, a witness of world conflicts and issues, but mostly as a dream-maker trying to make his public aware of social issues through artistic techniques and shapes that convey meaning and formulate proposals.

## **Francisco Forero**

Francisco Forero was born in 1958 in La Mesa (Colombia). From an early age, Forero became skilled at sketching and painting by studying and emulating the classics. He is also widely recognized for being in charge of government-sponsored projects such as the 'mural brigades' in his hometown, which bring together people from deprived rural sectors to teach them to express their concerns and aspirations through art. He is currently director of Paloma azul (Blue dove), an art school for underprivileged children, serving over 40 students.

His work is regularly exhibited in La Mesa and nearby towns. It is also in private collections in Europe and the United States. Forero's paintings echo his inner landscapes as well as depicting his country's deep longing for peace and beauty.

## **Gustavo Villegas**

Gustavo Villegas was born in 1976 in Mexico City, but now lives and works in nearby Querétaro. He holds a degree in Graphic Design and has also trained in various workshops with well-known Mexican artists such as Santiago Carbonell.

Gustavo's work has been shown in individual exhibitions at the Querétaro Museum of Art, the City Museum, as well as in galleries in San Miguel de Allende, and has participated in collective shows held in several Mexican cities. In 2006 he was awarded the "Alfredo Guati Rojo prize" and his winning piece was shown at the National Watercolor Museum in Mexico City.

In his work, which deals mainly with landscape and portrait, Gustavo's key aim is to depict both the internal and external landscape of human beings .

## **Josefina Di Candia**

Josefina Di Candia was born in Argentina. Her artistic education began by attending the two major National Fine Arts Schools in Buenos Aires: Manuel Belgrano and Piridiano Pueyrredón. She holds a degree in Plastic Arts. Josefina also studied History of Art and Philosophy, both in her country and abroad.

She has been teaching for about 15 years at various institutions in Argentina, such as the National Museum of Decorative Arts and the National University. Her work has been shown in collective and individual exhibitions since 1980, mostly in Argentina, but also in Rome, at the Argentina House of Culture.

Alberto Belluci, Director of her country's National Museums, wrote: "Josefina Di Candia inhabits a creative space simultaneously built up with shapes and dreams, matter and clouds, solidity and evanescence. And from those dreamlike shapes painted with great craftsmanship she extracts figures capable of eliciting complex reflections in the spectator".

## **Julia López**

Julia López, one of Mexico's best-known artists, was born in Ometepe in 1936. Posing as a model was her first contact with painting at the La Esmeralda School of Painting and Sculpture where important artists like Frida Kahlo and Francisco Zuñiga were teachers. She went on to write children's books and took up painting in the 1950s. Since then, she has known constant success and critical acclaim –she is probably one of the painters whose oeuvre has achieved greatest exposure both at home and abroad. Julia has more than 50 solo shows, some of them at the Palace of Fine Arts and The Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City.

In her work, we can find that the artist inspiration is in everything that surrounds her. From flowers and fruits to children and religious motives, Julia's paintings are filled with joy, color, smells and tastes.

Julia's work has been praised by all critics for its spontaneous nature, its sense of rhythm and her uncanny mixture of familiarity and exoticism. Her enjoyment of painting is evident in her colors as well as in her playful rendering of movement and light.

## **Karem Arrieta**

Karem Arrieta was born in Maracaibo (Venezuela) in 1964. After completing a first degree in Plastic Arts in her hometown, she went on to obtain an M.A. in Art in Paris. Her work has been recognized both in Venezuela and in France, winning various awards like the "Univers d'Arts", given by the Salon Grands et Jeunes in Paris.

Karem's paintings have traveled the world over: Japan, Poland, South Korea, Taiwan, Portugal, Croatia, the U.S.... Her work has been chosen twice for temporary exhibitions at MoLAA (Museum of Latin American Art) in Los Angeles.

Karem Arrieta has a personal language. Her visual vocabulary, form, color, drawing and composition might seem simple at first sight, but the pictorial surface's structural complexity leads us to aesthetic reflection. Each shape and figure holds a particular meaning.

As if stemming from magical realism, her paintings shock us with their intense though subliminal message. They enthrance the viewer: those figures are no doubt full of passion, but they also depict real characters. Environments are built in painstaking detail with great self-assurance. They surround the (mostly feminine) figure with suggestive backgrounds, perhaps haunted by goblins –though they may turn out to be curtains, or flowers or peculiar objects, hidden to enhance the whole composition... Karem's work is geared towards her innermost world, a world imbued with serenity and firmness.

## **Lorena Rodríguez**

Lorena was born in Monterrey (Mexico) in 1972. Self-taught, her contact with art began at an early age in the studio of her mother, Elsa Ayala, a teacher and painter.

Lorena holds a degree in Marketing from the prestigious Technological Institute of Monterrey, where she had her first solo exhibition. Ever since, she has pursued her true passion: painting.

After several years of experimentation, during which she participated in collective and solo exhibitions in Mexico as well as in Texas, she was selected to participate in “Masters of the Imagination: Latin American Fine Art Exhibition” in March, 2003. She was chosen from over 3000 artists from 105 countries to be part of the *Imagining ourselves* project at the International Museum of Women, in San Francisco. The end result of this project is embodied in a book to be promoted worldwide, showing the work of 25 to 35 year-old women in different artistic fields, with a foreword by Isabel Allende.

In 2004 Lorena was invited by the Mexican Consulate in Hong Kong to participate in *Mexican September*; she also held exhibitions at the Taipa Houses Museum of Macau, in China, and SOTA Gallery in Hong Kong.

## **Luis Morales**

Luis Morales was born in Tezoatlán, Oaxaca (Mexico) in 1963. He is a painter, sculptor and engraver trained at the most prestigious art schools in Mexico City. He was a student of Rafael Zepeda and Leocadio Acosta Falcón at the San Carlos National School of Plastic Arts.

Luis began his life as an artist in the early eighties and has shown his work in many individual and collective exhibitions in Mexico City, Oaxaca and Veracruz. He recently participated in the *Mujeres de Juárez* Exhibition, alongside some of the most important Mexican masters. He has also painted significant murals at the Condesa Building in Mexico City, the Book Fair Pavilion in Guadalajara, the town hall at Tixtla and the Somex Bank Building in Manhattan.

His production covers a wide range and has a clear experimental ingredient. He has been compared to Tamayo in that he embarks with equal success in various styles, evoking a variety of cultural legacies and displaying his brilliant knack for composition, subtle palettes and mastery of light effects. His ‘fiction’ is full of intriguing characters and invites the spectator to engage in introspection.

## **Marco Vargas**

A native of Mexico City, Marco Vargas (1961) holds an M.A. in engraving from San Carlos Academy, along with various diplomas in enameling, metal engraving and other techniques. His first degree was in visual arts and his main production is clay sculpture.

Marco has shown his work in various galleries throughout Mexico, including the Palace of Fine Arts, and participated in numerous collective exhibitions in Mexico, the United States, Canada, Ireland, France, Portugal and Japan.

His sculptures can be seen in permanent collections of leading museums such as the Modern Art Museum, National Center for the Arts and Carrillo Gil Museum in Mexico City. Among his students, Marco counts Javier Marín.

In his sculptures we find the imprint of the great Roman and Greek classical tradition, but his production is distinctly contemporary. Facial and bodily expression is a distinctive element in Marco Vargas' sculptures and set his work apart – he has created his own genre.

## **Marianela de la Hoz**

Inspired by a literary movement called “Hemofiction,” Mexican artist Marianela de la Hoz (1956) seeks to offer insights into the hidden character of her subjects through peculiar visual codes and exaggerated features. Her version of ‘magical realism’ has been termed *White violence*, because of her black humor and fantasy to depict the darker side of humanity. The miniscule scale of her paintings demands close scrutiny, further emphasizing their sometimes-subtle distortions and glimpses into a world of childish dreams. Like a spider draws a fly into its web, Marianela de la Hoz seeks to entrap the viewer rationally as well as viscerally.

She has exhibited her work in museums and galleries in Mexico, the USA, Canada and South America in over 20 solo shows and 70 group shows. She has been awarded various recognitions and prizes in Mexico and abroad.

## **Miguel Ángel Orta**

Miguel Ángel Orta was born in Mexico City in 1975. He studied photography at the Active School of Photography, Visual Arts at the National School of Plastic Arts in Mexico, and molding and engraving at the Fachhochschule in Hanover, Germany.

In recent years Miguel Angel has combined his artistic production with his work in the art department for the filmmaking industry. He believes that his work emphasizes the human figure, expression, feelings and the whole state of mind set forth through corporal language. His paintings also become a relationship between background and shape, showing a sequence of movement in a two-dimensional surface.

Miguel Angel has recently appear in the Mexican art world as a very promising artist holding an innovative plastic proposal with a lot of possibilities for success.

## **Ricardo Fernández**

Ricardo Fernandez was born in Durango (Mexico) in 1971 and trained at the Painting School, Durango University. His work has been shown in galleries and museums throughout Mexico.

Ricardo also worked as Director of the Ángel Zárraga Contemporary Art Museum in his hometown. His oeuvre, he says, stems from a desire to link reality and spirituality, from a search for answers to the existential quest of humankind through dreams and images that challenge the laws of nature. "In my images I strive to depict the dichotomy between life and death as a whole... the launching pad is a bed where two beings meet to generate life, where we enter the oniric world of dreamlike encounters or set sail into the eternal ocean..."

## **Rocío Sáenz**

Rocío Sáenz, a native of Chihuahua (Mexico), was born in 1971 and nowadays lives in Guadalajara. She did various courses at the Institute of Fine Arts in San Miguel de Allende and was taught by renowned Mexican painters such as Gilberto Aceves Navarro and Luis Nishizawa. She also trained in engraving at the Academy of Fine Arts of Florence (Italy) and holds an M.A. in Plastic Arts by the Superior Institute of Arts of Havana (Cuba).

In 2003 Rocío received the grant for promising young painters from the Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (Mexico), and later won the 2006/2007 Vermont Studio Center MexAm Fellowship award.

Rocío's work has been shown in collective and individual exhibitions in Mexico and the United States. Hers is a unique way of displaying before the spectator the world surrounding her, making a clear point of what she wants us to feel when having a painting in front of us: her work is strongly personal and she has no reluctance to manifest it.

## **Román Miranda**

Román Miranda was born in Mexico City in 1973, but now lives in the nearby city of Querétaro. He holds a degree in Graphic Design from the Universidad Iberoamericana, illustration being his main focus. He also trained in engraving and model drawing at the National Institute of Fine Arts School in San Miguel de Allende, as well as in professor Santiago Carbonell's workshop on Production and Creativity.

His work has been shown in solo and collective exhibitions in Mexico. As described by Ernesto Nava, Roman's work treads the fine line between dreams and through dreams. "Within his paintings we can catch some stories, invent new ones and rename the nahuales\*, making them ours –I know, since I have my own– in order to have them watch over us from the other side of the fabric, establishing another reality, their own reality".

\* According to Aztec mythology, the nahual is akin to a totemic animal, a spirit embodied in an animal shape, watching over each person.

## **Salvador Salazar**

Salvador Salazar was born in Aguascalientes (Mexico). After training as an architect, he went on to study painting both in Mexico City and in Houston, where his work was first shown at Alley Gallery and Victor Gallery.

He has participated in numerous individual and collective exhibitions as well as art auctions in galleries and museums in Mexico City, Oaxaca and Querétaro. He has shown his works at the Carrillo Gil Museum, the Museum of Mexican Cultures and the Salon of Mexican Plastic Art.

From 1989 until 2002 he was present at the very popular and successful annual Cultural Week at the Chopo Museum with pop movie art pieces. His works had a significant success at the *Archangels in the Latin-American Tradition* exhibition at the Museum of Latin-American Art in Los Angeles. In 2006 he was commissioned to paint a portrait of H.M. Queen Beatrice of the Netherlands.

His oeuvre is full of magic thoughts producing images reminiscent of the Kabala, dreams, myths and legends.

## **Sol Halabi**

Sol Halabi was born in Córdoba (Argentina) in 1977. She studied drawing and holds a degree as Plastic Arts Professor and a degree in Painting (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba). Her work has been shown in numerous exhibitions in Argentina as well as the United States and Germany.

In 2006 her work was selected to be included in the collection of the MoLAA –Museum of Latin Arts- in Los Angeles. Her productions have also been acquired by important private collections in Argentina, Latin America, the United States and Europe.

She's not only an artist working with a precise technique, but above all an artist with something to say: she does not explain -she suggests. Her materials and recurrent subjects share prominence in images and situations. Water, symbols, baby faces, ageless beings. Backgrounds where she can exploit the ultimate reason.

“The image asks to be, and when it begins to appear, the relationship with the piece of work is stronger than what I want to do. Each painting is a story. I cannot make several at the same time, and each one absorbs me entirely until it is finished. And then, happiness is such, so plentiful, that I start dancing on my own”

## **Xólotl Polo**

Xólotl Polo was born in 1964 in Mexico. He holds a degree in Graphic Design by the Universidad Iberoamericana and has also studied Theatre and Plastic Arts at the National Institute of Fine Arts of the state of Morelos.

Xólotl has shown his work in over 30 collective exhibitions and solo shows in galleries in Mexico and Spain -where he has also received various awards. He describes his work as seeking to provide the spectator with a different vision of day-to-day reality that, due to its closeness, we sometimes cannot perceive accurately.

“I wish that my work does not become a pessimistic reflection of current society, but an ideal image: that is why I build in so much light: it is not just one more element, but more of a protagonist in itself”.

## **Yoel Díaz**

Yoel Díaz was born in 1979 in Havana (Cuba), but now lives in Guadalajara (Mexico). He got a Painting and Drawing degree from the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Cuba. His work has been shown in over 40 collective exhibitions in Cuba, Mexico and France and has been acquired by public and private collectors in Cuba, Germany, Mexico, Holland, the U.S., Puerto Rico, France and Canada.

“Drama, sadness, pain, dreams, happiness, satisfaction, desire... they all join to conform a piece where the language of the body is the protagonist of the painting” – these are the artist’s own words.

“Throughout history, the human body has been a permanent and recurrent theme –in my oeuvre I project how this is a living, inexhaustible creative tradition”. Sober coloring and a savvy mix of influences produce an intensely personal work reflecting both well-assimilated principles and the capacity to go beyond them.