Perceptive Strokes: Women Artists of Panama

Trazos perceptivos: Mujeres artistas de Panamá
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Monica E. Kupfer
Curator
There is no more effective way to tell a story than to use the power of the image. Its descriptive ability captures daily events accurately, and we see protagonists in flesh and bone in their constant challenges with life. Perhaps that is why art has been, throughout history, a powerful medium for charting our progress.

In this sense, *Perceptive Strokes* is much more than an exhibition. It is a unique encounter with people full of vigor and the history of a country with geography sculpted to facilitate the meeting of two worlds. The artists in this wonderful exhibition are jugglers who express themselves with the brush; their talent and sensitivity allow us to see the female influence in the formation of Panamanian society.

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**Heroines of Culture**

**Heroínas de la Cultura**

No hay manera más efectiva de contar una historia que basarla en el poder de la imagen, en la capacidad descriptiva de plasmar con precisión los acontecimientos cotidianos, el día a día, los protagonistas de carne y hueso y sus constantes desafíos con la vida. Tal vez por esa razón, el arte ha sido, a lo largo de la historia, un medio poderoso para narrar nuestra evolución.

*Trazos perceptivos* es, en ese sentido, mucho más que una exposición. Es un encuentro único con la historia de un país, con un pueblo lleno de pujanza y con una geografía esculpida para facilitar el encuentro de dos mundos. Las artistas que se encuentran en esta maravillosa muestra, son juglares que se expresan con el pincel, con el talento, con su sensibilidad, y nos permiten ver la influencia femenina en la formación de la sociedad panameña.
The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has sought to exercise a leadership role for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to engage in an agenda for effective protection of women’s rights and, at the same time, welcome their participation and leadership in decision-making. **Perceptive Strokes** tells a story, through art, about desire, work and commitment. The women artists accessible to the public here are heroines who struggle with talent and creativity to ensure the dignity of women, and to secure their influence in the cultural evolution of a great nation.

We hope that the public will celebrate with us the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the IDB to be held in Panama in 2013 and that it finds, in the abstractions, concepts, pictorial realism, conceptual configurations and materials creatively displayed here, the tropical temperateness of the Darién, the wonderful infrastructure of the Panama Canal, the ingenuity of ordinary people, the faces of a festive and industrious society, and the transforming power to build the future day-by-day.

The IDB values culture and has made it an institutional highlight that is inseparable from development — **Perceptive Strokes** confirms this.

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**Luis Alberto Moreno**  
President  
Inter-American Development Bank

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El BID ha procurado desempeñar un papel activo para que los países de América Latina y el Caribe se comprometan en implementar una agenda de protección efectiva de los derechos de la mujer y al mismo tiempo, permitan que las mujeres participen en la toma de decisiones y ejerzan liderazgo. **Trazos perceptivos** es una forma de contar con arte nuestro deseo, nuestro trabajo y nuestro compromiso. Las creadoras que estarán al alcance del público son heroínas que luchan con talento y creatividad en la dignificación de la mujer y en garantizar su influencia en la evolución cultural de una gran nación.

Esperamos que el público festeje con nosotros la Reunión Anual de la Asamblea de Gobernadores del BID a realizarse en Panamá en 2013 y encuentre en las abstracciones, conceptos, realismo pictórico, configuraciones conceptuales y materiales creativamente doblegados, la templanza tropical del Darién, la maravillosa infraestructura del Canal de Panamá, el ingenio del ciudadano corriente, los rostros de una sociedad festiva y laboriosa, y su fuerza transformadora que construye diariamente el futuro.

El BID valora la cultura y hace de ella un sello institucional inseparable del desarrollo. **Trazos perceptivos** así lo confirma.
Panama: Land of Creative Women
Panamá: tierra de creadoras

On one occasion, Ernst Gombrich said that there is no art, only artists. In the strength of his words, his philosophy was reflected by portraying the artist with the driving force of creation, perceiving in it the natural ability to capture through talent the evolution of society itself.

Having Gombrich in mind, Perceptive Strokes is an exhibition that highlights, honors and exalts the character of women artists who have recorded the history of Panama with the magic of their brushes. In works by Amelia Lyons de Alfaro, Roser Muntañola de Oduber, Amalia Rossi de Jeanine, Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño, Olga Sánchez and Coqui Calderón we are delighted with their colorful language, and at the same time with their narrative, realistic and visionary spirit, reflecting a Panamanian soil that surges with energy and becomes a hinge that culturally connects our continents.

En alguna ocasión, Ernst Gombrich expresó que no existe el arte, únicamente artistas. En la fuerza de sus palabras se encontraba reflejada su filosofía de ver en el artista la fuerza motriz de la creación, de percibir en él la capacidad natural de plasmar con su talento la evolución misma de la sociedad.

Recordando a Gombrich, Trazos perceptivos es una exposición que destaca, enaltece y honra la figura de las mujeres artistas que han escrito con la magia de sus pinceles la historia de Panamá. En la obra de Amelia Lyons de Alfaro, Roser Muntañola de Oduber, Amalia Rossi de Jeanine, Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño, Olga Sánchez y Coqui Calderón nos deleitamos con su colorido, narrativa, espíritu realista y al mismo tiempo visionario, reflejando una tierra panameña que surge con ímpetu y se convierte en una bisagra que une culturalmente nuestros continentes.
The ability to convey political messages, make the nude a subtle and graceful symbol of women’s rights, to dignify women and the clamor to exercise deserved leadership is appreciated in works by Alicia Viteri, Isabel De Obaldía, Olga Sinclair, Iraida Icaza, Ana Elena Garuz, and Lezlie Milson. Fabiola Buritica, Emily Zhukov and María Raquel Cochez are creative promoters who build a connection toward artistic modernity with materials, abstractions and innovative proposals.

Sandra Eleta, Victoria Suescum, Rachelle Mozman are heroines who defy stereotypes, making nature and everyday life the protagonists of a beautiful setting. Susana Arias, Teresa Icaza, Amalia Tapia and Donna Conlon take over the landscape and biodiversity, the urban and wild jungle, to form a social commitment displayed by art.

*Perceptive Strokes* represents to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) the opportunity to express on behalf of women artists our challenge as a development organization to contribute every day to protect women’s rights and to ensure the necessary leadership role in guiding society.

While we honor Panama as host of the IDB Annual Meeting in 2013, this exhibition also enhances the role of Panamanian women in building a prosperous country with a growing environment of opportunities.

We hope this exhibition—organized by the IDB Cultural Center, curated with the knowledge, professionalism and expertise of Monica Kupfer, another Panamanian who in her field elevates her nation, and supported by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Panama—will help the public to appreciate the history, and wealth of a country that fulfills the role of uniting the world.

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**Iván Duque Márquez**  
Chief  
Cultural, Solidarity and Creativity Affairs Division  
Inter-American Development Bank

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**Iván Duque Márquez**  
Jefe  
División de Asuntos Culturales, de Solidaridad y de Creatividad  
Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo
Perceptive Strokes:
Women Artists of Panama
Trazos perceptivos: Mujeres artistas de Panamá

Monica E. Kupfer
Independent curator and art historian

Although they share gender and geography, the women artists in the exhibition Perceptive Strokes are not similar. Their years of birth range from the 1880s to the 1970s, and their exposure to artistic and formal education varies from being self-taught to holding graduate degrees in Fine Arts. The group includes a working single mother, a former First Lady, young artists, and painters who have passed away.

In addition, the women in this show work with a variety of materials and different media, and the artworks displayed were created over a broad period, from ca. 1919 to the present. Nevertheless, they reveal interesting coincidences and juxtapositions across the decades. This essay considers their themes and styles in direct relation to the works exhibited, and proves that although some of their concerns were strictly female, or even feminist, most of their creations are not gender-specific. They deal with broader issues that concern human beings in general, some of which are particular to Panama’s historical development, as interpreted by some very perceptive women.

Most reviews of the history of art in Panama during its first decades after independence in 1903 mention just a few prominent painters, none of whom were women. In fact, in most publications, it is necessary to jump forward to the mid-twentieth century before finding any reference to female artists. History recorded mainly the artistic activities carried out by men because, at the beginning of Panama’s national life, it was the better-educated male artists who were assigned the important commissions, as in the case of the much-admired Roberto Lewis’s murals in the most important government
buildings, Manuel E. Amador’s sketches for the national flag, and Carlos Endara’s photos of the new burgeoning society. Nevertheless, research proves that the artistic production during the early years of the republic was not an exclusively male domain.¹

The First Women Artists

There are some isolated early cases of women who were painters in Panama, such as Ida Belli, who made portraits of the nation’s first two presidents, and Nicole Garay, who was also a poet, a pianist, and the director of Panama’s music academy. However, Roberto Lewis’s student rosters from the Escuela de Pintura, the national art academy he founded in 1912, as well as photographs of his classes, prove that he had numerous female students. In 1913, for example, his list of pupils comprised 100 men and no fewer than 80 women from Panama and the Canal Zone. Furthermore, as the photographer Carlos Endara recorded, Lewis also taught art at the Escuela Normal de Institutoras, Panama’s all-girl school for teachers.²

Among Roberto Lewis’s outstanding students was Amelia Lyons de Alfaro, a noteworthy artist whose production remained limited to the private realm. She studied art in London in her youth and later in Panama under Roberto Lewis. Her oil paintings include several realistic portraits, among which the best known is one of her niece Rebeca Alfaro as a little girl sitting in a large chair, with a face that reveals her impatience with posing. In a later portrait of her included in this exhibition, Rebeca appears as a young lady with a serious look. In it, the careful handling of the face contrasts with the looser brushstrokes for the clothing, both testaments to the artist’s abilities.

In a different vein, Lyons de Alfaro also painted a shoemaker she invited to pose at the academy. The painting, in which he appears bent over a shoe, relates in style to late nineteenth-century realism and links thematically to the art of other Central American artists of this time. Lyons also painted landscapes, mainly in the 1930s during

Las primeras mujeres artistas

Hay algunos casos aislados de mujeres que fueron pintoras en el antiguo Panamá, como Ida Belli, retratista de los primeros dos presidentes del país, y Nicole Garay, también poeta, pianista y directora de la Escuela Nacional de Musica de Panamá. Sin embargo, las listas de Roberto Lewis de los estudiantes inscritos en la Escuela de Pintura, la academia de arte que él fundó en 1912, así como las fotografías de sus clases, confirman que tuvo muchas alumnas. En 1913, por ejemplo, su lista de estudiantes contenía los nombres de 100 varones y no menos de 80 mujeres de Panamá y la Zona del Canal. Además, tal como aparece documentado en algunas fotografías de Carlos Endara, Lewis también enseñó arte en la Escuela Normal de Institutoras de Panamá, una escuela exclusivamente para mujeres³.

Entre las alumnas sobresalientes de Roberto Lewis estaba Amelia Lyons de Alfaro, una artista notable cuya producción quedó restringida al dominio privado. Ella estudió arte en Londres en su juventud y continuó sus estudios en Panamá con Roberto Lewis. Sus óleos incluyen varios retratos realistas de los cuales el más conocido es el de su sobrina, Rebeca Alfaro, de pequeña sentada en una gran sillita con una expresión en el rostro que revela su impaciencia al posar. En otro retrato posterior de Rebeca, que es parte de la exposición, vemos a una joven con un aire de seriedad. El manejo más preciso de la cara en contraste con las pinceladas más sueltas de la ropa es un testamento de las aptitudes de la artista.

Lyons de Alfaro también se interesó por otro tipo de personajes, como un zapatero al que invitó a posar en la academia. El estilo de esa pintura, en la que él

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¹ Monica Kupfer, editor, Mujeres en las artes de Panamá en el siglo XX (Panamá: Fundación Arte y Cultura e Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 2011).
² M. Kupfer and Angela Picardi, “Mujeres en las artes plásticas de Panamá en el siglo XX” in Kupfer, ed., Mujeres en las artes... op.cit.
³ Mónica Kupfer, editora, Mujeres en las artes de Panamá en el siglo XX (Panamá: Fundación Arte y Cultura e Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 2011).
two sojourns in the United States. Unlike the large, formal portraits, her landscapes were mostly small-scale studies of nature. There is no indication that Doña Amelia ever took part in a public exhibition.

Although information is scarce for the period from the 1930s to mid-century, paintings in private collections and newspaper articles provide evidence of the activity of several women artists born abroad who lived in Panama, such as the Costa Rican Pachita Crespi, the German artist Erna Köhpcke, Winnie Collins from the United States, and Irene Alfaro de Rojas, a Chilean painter who taught at the national art school. Alfaro de Rojas shocked Panamanian audiences by presenting paintings of nudes, male and female, in public exhibitions, which is said to have caused her excommunication from the Catholic Church.

By 1950, there were numerous women artists, considering that the National Exhibition of that year showcased the work of 24 women (versus 39 men). Nevertheless, in the seminal essay*La Pintura en Panamá* published by the respected historian Renato Ozores in 1953, on the occasion of Panama’s first 50 years of independence, the author made reference to only very few women artists.*

**The Innovators**

There were four women active in the 1950s that are considered the “great innovators of the Panamanian art scene”: Roser Muntañola de Oduber, Amalia Rossi de Jeanine, Beatrix Briceño and Yolanda Mejía de Bech. They held their first exhibitions in Panama between 1953 and 1960, surprising the local audience, which was uninformed regarding vanguard artistic styles. These women shared similar experiences:

…They all made art their profession, although they had to share it with their family lives and the difficulties in being accepted that were typical of the 1950s; they all carried out profound and serious studies of painting, and motivated by the optimism about Latin America’s future prevalent during that decade, they were prolifically active, as much on the national level, as well as internationally.*

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4 Kupfer and Picardi, w. 14.

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4 Kupfer and Picardi, w. 14.
It is noteworthy that in 1953, just three years after arriving in Panama, Roser Montañola de Oduber was the only woman in a group show of artists from this country organized by José Gómez Sicre at the Pan American Union in Washington, D.C., where she was again invited to exhibit in 1960. *Children’s Games*, which was in that exhibition, fits thematically into Montañola’s oeuvre from the late fifties, when she often painted scenes of mothers and children, and became a mother herself. With a rich overall texture and diffused forms, the round shapes of the children’s heads stand out in this semi-abstract composition in which the “figures resemble heavy soft rubber dolls with vestigial limbs.”5

After she and her family moved to Barcelona in 1961, Montañola continued to develop her career as an artist and a professor. She still lives there, where her most recent exhibition took place in 2011. Its description could apply to *Children’s Games*: “An oeuvre that is committed, in which the figure of woman rules as a constant expression of strength and vindication…The figurative character…has progressively diminished until becoming strokes of color that insinuate bodies, hands and feet, all perfectly fragmented.”6

Trained in her native Argentina, Amalia Rossi de Jeanine worked as an artist and art professor in Panama, where she arrived in 1950. She was responsible, together with her husband, Panamanian artist Juan Bautista Jeanine, for creating some of the nation’s most important murals, such as the large fresco in St. Joseph Seminary in Las Cumbres and a mosaic mural for the Justo Arosemena Institute in Panama City. In 1968, Rossi won the competition for the commission of two nine-meter high murals for the building of Panama’s National Lottery headquarters in the city of Colon.

Rossi’s style reflects its roots in Cubism and the geometric trends in vogue in South America, but with stylized figures and a sense of rhythm related to the modernist style of Panamanian painter Juan Manuel Cedeño. Her tempera painting *Fish* is typical of this artistic language in which figurative elements are so stylized, they become de pintura y, motivadas por el sentir de optimismo en cuanto al futuro latinoamericano que reinaba en aquella década, fueron fecundamente activas tanto en el plano nacional, como en el internacional.4

Cabe señalar que en 1953, apenas tres años después de su llegada a Panamá, Roser Montañola de Oduber fue la única mujer en una muestra colectiva de artistas panameños, organizada por José Gómez Sicre en la Unión Panamericana en Washington, D.C., donde se le extendió una nueva invitación a la artista para que presentara sus obras en 1960. *Juegos de niños*, incluido en esa exposición, es un lienzo de Montañola que encaja con sus temas de finales de los años cincuenta, cuando con frecuencia pintó escenas de madres e hijos, en un periodo en que ella misma fue madre. Con una rica textura superficial y formas difusas, los contornos redondos de las cabezas de los niños sobresalen en esta composición semiabstracta en la que las “figuras parecen muñecas de hule blandas y pesadas con miembros rudimentarios”.5

Tras mudarse a Barcelona con su familia en 1961, Montañola continuó desarrollando su carrera como artista y profesora. Sigue viviendo allí, donde tuvo su más reciente exposición en 2011. La descripción de esa muestra reciente podría aplicarse a *Juegos de niños*: “Una obra comprometida, en la que la figura de mujer es la norma, como una expresión constante de fortaleza y vindicación…El personaje figurativo…se ha reducido progresivamente hasta convertirse en pinceladas de color que insinúan cuerpos, manos y pies, todos perfectamente fragmentados”.6

Formada en su Argentina natal, Amalia Rossi de Jeanine fue artista y profesora de arte en Panamá, donde radicó desde 1950. Fue responsable, junto con su esposo, el artista panameño Juan Bautista Jeanine, de la creación de algunos de los murales más importantes del país, como el fresco de grandes dimensiones en el Seminario de San José en Las Cumbres y un mural de mosaicos para el Instituto Justo Arosemena en la Ciudad de Panamá. En 1968, Rossi ganó la competencia para la realización de dos murales de nueve metros de alto para el edificio sede de la Lotería Nacional de Panamá en la ciudad de Colón.

El estilo de Rossi refleja sus raíces en el cubismo y las tendencias geométricas en boga en América del Sur, pero con figuras estilizadas y un ritmo visual que


4 Kupté y Picardi, pág. 14.


The 1950s were a time of innovation in art in Panama, a situation enriched by several women who had moved there from abroad. Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño was born in England, but became a Panamanian citizen in 1943. Briceño was influenced by geometric abstraction after a sojourn in Brazil, as evidenced in her work by the use of bright, flat acrylic colors and hard-edge painting. However, she remained a figurative artist, tending towards a naïve and magical realism, and even ventured into surrealist imagery later in her career.

Briceño’s Dollies provides a good example of this artist’s style of painting and her characteristic combination of a sense of humor and concern for social issues, with a particular emphasis for the situation of women, reflected here in a statement about the homogenization of female beauty. A row of prefabricated female mannequins roll off a conveyor belt, and are removed from it by a man dressed like a doctor in a room reminiscent of old hospitals. Ironically, under the belt, these figures have legs that seem to be walking, with colorful stockings and shoes that make them seem human. The single bulb shining on them from above adds a sinister feeling to the operation, emphasized by a pair of disembodied eyes that observe the scene through a tiny window in the background.

The stiff naked dolls in Briceño’s painting contrast dramatically with the female nude in Study by Olga Sánchez. Unlike the traditional rendering of a reclining nude, Sanchez’s figure is an anti-Olympia: she shows only her back, and looks away, rather than confronting the viewer. Her head falls lower than her body and the most voluminous part of her silhouette is a bony hip. Rather than satisfying the imaginary “male gaze,” Sanchez explores the nude body through strong, expressive, curved lines, echoed—with a touch of irony—in the swirls of the sheets beneath.

Although it is dated 1995, this Study was painted based on a sketch from Olga Sánchez’s years as an art student and artist in Barcelona, where she lived from 1954 to 1973, when she returned to Panama. While there, as a member of the Real Círculo Artístico, she had access to sessions with live models, which she attended almost abstract shapes. The use of curves for the fish and as waves in the background contributes to a sense of dynamic movement that enliven the image. In addition, Rossi made a symbolic reference to her adoptive country, as the word Panama means “abundance of fish.”

The década de 1950 fue una época de innovación en el arte en Panamá, una situación enriquecida por varias mujeres que habían llegado del extranjero a residir en el país. Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño nació en Inglaterra, pero se naturalizó panameña en 1943. Briceño se vio influenciada por la abstracción geométrica durante una estancia en Brasil, como lo evidencian los tonos brillantes, bordes precisos y colores acrílicos uniformes de sus pinturas. Sin embargo, siguió siendo una artista figurativa con tendencia a un realismo ingenuo y mágico, que incluso se aventuró más adelante en su carrera a pintar imágenes surrealistas.
on a regular basis over a period of 20 years. Within Panamanian art, Olga Sánchez’s work is unique for the powerful use of drawing and the expressionistic character of her compositions. She has always transmitted an intensely personal view of humanity in her drawings and paintings, as well as in her abundant production in ceramics, which are often small sculptures of female figures.

**Political Matters**

Interpretations of the human figure, often of women, as well as the emotional and political side of human nature, have held an important place in Coqui Calderón’s oeuvre. Since the 1960s, her artistic production has ranged from kinetic compositions in flat bright colors related to op art, to landscapes with anatomical references, to political statements, and her more recent images of women-angels.

In the 1980s, Calderón focussed on themes related to Panama’s dire political situation. The early works included *Protesta* ‘84, drawings with military boots, caps and jail bars over the map of Panama. Calderón was interested in “the subject of the military forces and corruption, which is the greatest problem we have…The military men have turned into machines that don’t think…The arrogance, the money and the repression have made them not see, not hear, not feel.”

A few years later, Calderón produced the series entitled *Winds of Fury: 1987-1990* in which she depicted the dramatic events during the final years of the military dictatorship in Panama. *Black Friday II* refers to a specific day when Panamanians demonstrating peacefully, while waving white handkerchiefs (a symbol of the opposition), were aggressively attacked by riot police. Many were wounded and arrested.

The power in the hands of the military forces also permeates Alicia Viteri’s caricaturesque series of paintings entitled *Prince Prospero*, borrowing the name from Edgar Allan Poe’s short story *The Red Death*. Viteri’s characters are at a party where the men—ministers of government, rich men and buffoons—wear oversized golden epaulettes, mocking traditional military uniforms. Some of her characters are ministerial figures, while in another set the men wear white handkerchiefs over their eyes and noses, mocking the military forces.

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7 Cecilia Alegre, “En Etcétera: Mi Protesta”, Archives of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Panama, Republic of Panama.
the female figures have large breasts and huge heads of golden hair, while others wear pearls, lace dresses or crowns to attend christenings or weddings. In The Enamored Minister, a large overbearing military man is romancing a blond woman in a white dress with bare feet. The short, swift strokes in her skirt and her falling hair convey a sense of action, or of sudden attack.

When Viteri first arrived in Panama, she was mostly a printmaker, known for her images of grotesque humanoid insects. With a constant ironic sense of humor, in her later phases, she depicted nuns, fancy men and women, even mummies. In 1984, she presented “Espacios Pictóricos,” one of the earliest installations of Panamanian art, which included her compositions of Funerals and Carnivals, and a stark statement about social reality. More recently, Viteri has painted natural landscapes, and turned to digital art, drawing and painting with her computer, to produce large, colorful prints, many of which are autobiographical.

Although she started out as a neo-expressionist painter Isabel De Obaldía is most active today as a glass sculptor. Curiously, although her work has always been figurative, with an emphasis on animals and human beings, there are no women. She interprets humanity through figures of men. Like Calderón and Viteri, in the late 80s, De Obaldía openly expressed her feelings about Panama’s desperate political situation in a series of paintings with figures of decapitated, hanged or mutilated men. Shown at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in 1989—the same year the U.S. invaded Panama—the works made direct reference to the repression and torture the military dictatorship imposed on Panama’s citizens.

Years later, those dismembered bodies come to mind when one observes her glass sculpture entitled The Arms of Irga Tara (which means “big man” in the Dorace Indian language). It is an installation that combines two suspended human arms of opaque colorless glass with copper bracelets with a simple, headless and armless torso, drawn in a stark white outline, against a black background. The muscular arms seem powerful but also useless in their disconnection from the body. The body, in turn, is just an outline, with no potential movement at all. The work transmits a sense of futility and loss, even as it conveys a feeling of contained strength.

nombre del cuento de Edgar Allan Poe La muerte roja. Los personajes de Viteri están en una fiesta donde los caballeros—ministros de gobierno, hombres adinerados y bufones—usan charreteras doradas demasiado grandes, burlándose de los uniformes militares. Algunas de las figuras femeninas tienen senos protuberantes y enormes cabezas con cabello dorado, en tanto que otras lucen perlas, vestidos de encaje y coronas para asistir a bautizos o bodas. En El Ministro Enamorado, un militar grande y dominante está conquistando a una mujer rubia vestida de blanco y descalza. Las pinceladas rasgadas en su falda y su cabello suelto producen una impresión de acción, o de un ataque súbito.

Cuando Viteri llegó a Panamá en los años setenta, era principalmente una artista de grabado, conocida por sus imágenes grotescas de insectos humanóides. Con un sentido del humor irónico constante, en sus fases posteriores ha representado monjas, hombres y mujeres extravagantes, hasta monjas. En 1984, presentó Espacios pictóricos, una de las primeras instalaciones en el arte panameño, que incluyó sus composiciones de Funerales y carnavales, con sus energéticas denuncias acerca de la realidad social. En fecha más reciente, Viteri pintó paisajes naturales y, luego pasó al arte digital, al dibujo y la pintura con su computadora, para producir composiciones grandes y coloridas, muchas de ellas autobiográficas.

Aunque Isabel De Obaldía comenzó como una pintora neoexpresionista, su actividad principal en la actualidad es la escultura en vidrio. Curiosamente, aunque su trabajo siempre ha sido figurativo, con énfasis en los animales y los seres humanos, en su obra no hay mujeres. Interpreta la humanidad a través de figuras de hombres. Al igual que Calderón y Viteri, a fines de 1980, De Obaldía expresó abiertamente sus sentimientos acerca de la terrible situación política de Panamá en una serie de pinturas con figuras de hombres decapitados, ahorcados o mutilados. Las obras mostradas en el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo en 1989—el mismo año en que Estados Unidos invadió Panamá—eran una referencia directa a la represión y la tortura que la dictadura militar imponía a los ciudadanos de Panamá.

Años más tarde, esos cuerpos desmembrados vienen a la mente al apreciar la escultura en vidrio titulada Los brazos de Irga Tara (que significa “hombre grande” en el dialecto de los indígenas Doraces). Es una instalación de dos brazos humanos de vidrio incoloro y opaco (con brazaletes de cobre) que están suspendidos frente al esbozo de un torso sin brazos ni cabeza, dibujado con líneas blancas sobre un fondo negro. Los brazos musculosos parecen fuertes, pero también resultan inútiles por estar desconectados del cuerpo. Éste, a su
Figures and Nudes

Human musculature and a sense of potential movement characterize Olga Sinclair’s painting Revelation, from 1999. It is typical of a phase in her work that began around 1995, in which she achieved dynamic connections between realistic foreground figures—often nude men and women, alone or as couples—and abstract backgrounds. In this composition, a somewhat androgynous human torso emerges from a cocoon-like form into a vortex of swirls and abstract colors. There is an effective contrast between the flat colors around the figure and the dark ovoid space behind the naked torso. According to the artist, the work relates to a time when she was having revelations during her sleep, suggesting the autobiographical nature of this and other works.

The expressive use of form and color has been a lifetime pursuit for Olga Sinclair. From the time of her early paintings, she focused on the human figure, mostly solitary women in languid poses and subdued colors. Over the years, she increasingly incorporated brighter tones, often echoing the color and abstract compositional values that characterized the work of her father, Panamanian painter Alfredo Sinclair. She has often painted nudes, usually in expressive corporal deformation (with a nod to Francis Bacon) and evermore contrasting colors and dramatic chiaroscuro effects.

The human figure appears often in the work of photographer Iraida Icaza, as in 1983, when she created a series in delicate black and white images with a nude woman as the protagonist. It is also the case with her Untitled (Emannuelle) from 1996, where a female figure sits, leaning forward, forming a triangle with her outstretched arms. Her immobility, light skin and thin limbs collude with the drapery in the background and an overall pattern of gray marble to transform her into a sculpture, a timeless image of femininity. The stone effect is made more emphatic by the contrasting strips of multicolored leaves and green ivy that cross the composition diagonally and beneath the figure.

There is a poetic feeling and a painterly quality to many of Iraida Icaza’s images, even though she has described her process as a photographer to be close to that of a scientist in a lab.8 Due vez, es solamente un contorno, sin ninguna posibilidad de movimiento. La obra transmite una sensación de futilidad y pérdida, aun cuando comunica un sentimiento de fuerza contenida.

Figuras y desnudos

La musculatura humana y la sensación de movimiento contenido caracterizan la obra pictórica de Olga Sinclair Revelación, de 1999. Es típica de una fase de su trabajo que comenzó alrededor de 1995, en la que lograba conexiones dinámicas entre las figuras realistas del primer plano—con frecuencia hombres y mujeres desnudos, solos o en pareja—y trasfondos abstractos. En esta composición emerge un torso más bien andrógino de lo que parece un capullo, hacia un vértice de remolinos y colores abstractos. Hay un logrado contraste entre los colores planos alrededor de las figuras y el espacio ovoide oscuro detrás del torso desnudo. Según la artista, la obra se relaciona con una época en la que tuvo revelaciones mientras dormía, lo que sugiere el carácter autobiográfico de ésta y otras obras.

El uso expresivo de la forma y el color ha sido una búsqueda de Olga Sinclair durante toda su vida. Desde la creación de sus primeras pinturas se concentró en la figura humana, en su mayor parte mujeres solitarias en poses lánguidas y colores tenues. Con los años, fue incorporando cada vez más tonos brillantes, a menudo como un reflejo de los colores y los valores de las composiciones abstractas que caracterizaron las obras de su padre, el pintor panameño Alfredo Sinclair. Ella ha pintado desnudos con frecuencia, por lo general con una deformación corporal expresiva (en un gesto de reconocimiento a Francis Bacon), colores cada vez más contrastantes y dramáticos efectos de claroscuro.

La figura humana suela aparecer en la obra de la fotógrafa Iraida Icaza, como en 1983, cuando creó una serie en imágenes delicadas en blanco y negro con una mujer desnuda como protagonista. Lo mismo sucede con su fotografía Sin título (Emannuelle) de 1996, en la que una figura femenina está sentada, inclinada hacia adelante, formando un triángulo con sus brazos extendidos. La combinación de su inmovilidad, piel clara y miembros delgados con la tela del trasfondo y el diseño de las vetas de mármol gris que cubre la escena transforman a la mujer en una escultura, una imagen atemporal de la feminidad. El efecto pétreo se intensifica por el contraste con las franjas de hojas multicolores y hiedra verde que atraviesan la composición y pasan por debajo de la figura.

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to a life-long interest in nature and science, a large part of her oeuvre has often focused on zoological or botanical forms. In spite of this, although they are impeccably produced, her images tend to be lyrical and mysterious, rather than clinical.

Female bodies, or some of their parts, are the subject of Ana Elena Garuz’s Untitled (1996), an assemblage of “drawings” with white acrylic paint on 36 sheets of black sandpaper. It is a work of contrasts that is both rough and sensual. Stroking the hairs against that dark surface suggests a physically aggressive act that contrasts with the composition’s orderly presentation as a geometric grid on the wall. The white brushstrokes seem soft and organic, echoing the curves of drops, blotches or anatomical forms, both male and female. At the same time, they look like signs and symbols, calligraphic strokes in an unknown language on the surface dark stones.

Garuz, who is now mostly a painter, initially worked with a variety of materials including wax, oils, acrylics, and hair, to create two- and three-dimensional pieces with an organic look and obvious references to human anatomy. She began with gestural compositions in a style related to Abstract Expressionism, which have developed over time into canvasses with flat colors rendered in precise, hard-edged forms. In spite of the changes over time, all her work relates to her early explorations in which strands of hair provided the lines in a drawing or the textures in a collage, and colors and viscous media imitated body fluids.

The representation of human beings through body parts or organic forms plays a fundamental role in the art of Lezlie Milson, who has stated that her “work is about being a woman and an artist. It’s about a compulsion for articulating the unspoken: it is tactile and emotional.”9 Her three-dimensional works combine painting, sculpture, assemblage and installation art, and range from small structures to large “penetrables.” Initially, she worked with vertical wooden poles, which she altered with rope or nails, covered with canvas, and then painted or decorated. Over time, she incorporated other forms, such as open hands, fists or breasts.

Hay una sensación poética y una calidad pictórica en muchas de las imágenes de Iraida Icaza, aunque ella ha descrito su proceso fotográfico como un trabajo parecido al de un científico en un laboratorio5. Ella siempre se ha interesado por la naturaleza y las ciencias, motivo por el cual gran parte de su obra se ha concentrado en formas zoológicas o botánicas. Aunque Icaza produce sus fotografías de manera impecable, sus imágenes tienden a ser más líricas y misteriosas que clínicas.

Los cuerpos femeninos, o algunas de sus partes, son el tema de la obra Sin título de 1996 de Ana Elena Garuz, un montaje de “dibujos” con pintura acrílica blanca en 36 páginas de papel de lija negro. Se trata de una obra de contrastes, que es a la vez áspera y sensual. La idea de frotar el pelo de un pincel contra esa superficie oscura sugiere un acto de agresión física que contrasta con la presentación ordenada de la obra como una cuadrícula geométrica en la pared. Las pinceladas blancas tienen un aspecto suave y orgánico, como eco de las curvas de gotas, manchas o formas anatómicas, masculinas y femeninas. Al mismo tiempo, parecen signos y símbolos, trazos caligráficos en un lenguaje desconocido sobre la superficie de piedras negras.

Garuz, mejor conocida ahora como pintora, trabajó inicialmente con una variedad de materiales, como cera, óleos, acrílico y cabello, para crear piezas bidimensionales y tridimensionales de apariencia orgánica, con referencias obvias a la anatomía humana. En sus pinturas, comenzó con composiciones gestuales en un estilo ligado al expresionismo abstracto, que con el tiempo han evolucionado hacia lienzos con colores planos y formas de bordes precisos. A pesar de los cambios con el paso del tiempo, toda su obra guarda relación con aquellas primeras exploraciones, en las que las líneas de un dibujo o las texturas de un collage eran creadas con cabello, y los colores y medios viscosos imitaban fluidos corporales.

La representación de seres humanos mediante elementos anatómicos o formas orgánicas cumple una función fundamental en el arte de Lezlie Milson, quien ha afirmado que “su obra se trata de ser mujer y artista. Tiene que ver con una compulsión por articular lo indecible: es táctil y emocional9. Sus obras tridimensionales combinan pintura, escultura, ensamblaje y arte de instalación, y abarcan desde

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9 Quoted by Pedro Prados, “Lezlie Milson” in Cien Años de Arte en Panamá, p. 141.
Milson’s installation *Tellus Mater* makes reference to the magical, reproductive and protective roles associated with women, in this case, Mother Earth. At the same time, the two-hundred disembodied breasts speak to the viewer about sacrifice—as in the martyrdom of female saints—while their placement in a pile, like so many discarded objects, turns our thoughts to the misogynist reference to women as “pairs of tits.” Cast from gourds, then painted and touched up with lipstick, Milson’s mound of small hemispheres trigger multiple associations that range from the nurturing nature of motherhood to the demeaning character of pornography.

**High Expectations**

A self-taught artist, *Fabiola Buritica* learned to paint by observing painters when she was an artists’ model. She must have observed well, as her first exhibition was described as having “substantial merits: fluid, spontaneous compositions that are the consequence of a renewed search in each painting.”

Nevertheless, Buritica’s condition as a self-taught artist is a double-edged sword. As her paintings show, it releases her from the burden of following academic rules, but has forced her to learn by trial and error. She admits she loves having this freedom in her art, but that “those who claim that [she] smears canvasses, rather than painting them, are probably right.”

Almost all of Buritica’s work rotates around the theme of motherhood. The forced separation from her only child due to divorce marked her life deeply and her suffering comes through in the art she has produced over the years. Buritica’s paintings—such as *Liberty* in this exhibition—often depict maternal figures and babies, anwwd also the faces of children and the forms of fish or waves, which she associates with life and freedom.

The hard work of carving and casting to create metal sculptures in aluminum, iron and bronze has occupied *Emily Zhukov* for over 20 years.

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Some artists delve deeply into society’s expectations of women. María Raquel Cochez, in particular, explores the consequences of society’s rules and demands regarding food, as well as its distorted concepts of physical beauty. In works that are often self-referential, she considers the issue of self-esteem, depicting the way people act and even hurt themselves in an effort to meet artificial ideals of beauty, as well as the sexual undercurrents inherent in matters regarding our bodies. Using her own experiences with an eating disorder and a distorted body image as points of reference, Cochez has created works that range from seemingly cheerful paintings on canvas to challenging, even disturbing, works of performance art.

Cochez’s Self Portrait with Burger is a good example of the autobiographical nature of her oeuvre. She has painted herself while eating, a pose that contradicts the possibility of a portrait that idealizes the sitter. Her head is lowered and her eyes look down, avoiding any communication with the viewer. Whereas the hamburger in its paper wrapper makes reference to North American junk food, the background has a colorful pattern of fruit and flowers, typical of the plastic tablecloths used in most cheap Panamanian eateries. Its cheery look contrasts with the plastic tablecloths used in most cheap

Toward the end of the 1990s, as exemplified by her series Tell Me Where it Hurts, she started combining found objects with ceramic, cement, and cast pieces to produce especially powerful assemblages. In works that combine a search for beauty with a sense of pain, the artist has explored multiple alternatives, such as placing sculptural objects that resemble body parts together with chains in a cast iron pan, or hanging a voluminous bronze heart on a scale in balance with an industrial iron weight.

The piece entitled St. Catherine, from 2000, belongs to this line of work in Zhukov’s career. A twisted steel bicycle wheel mounted on the wall has two delicate human feet stuck between its spokes. The feet, which are made of cement, are partially covered by a form in cast aluminum that resembles the draped folds at the bottom of a long robe. As with many of Zhukov’s sculptures, the piece allows for different interpretations. It triggers thoughts of a traffic accident in our own rushed time, as much as it does the traditional Christian iconography for St. Catherine of Alexandria, who was martyred on an instrument of torture known as the breaking wheel.

La pieza titulada Autorretrato con una hamburguesa es un ejemplo del carácter autobiográfico de la obra de Cochez. Se pintó a sí misma comiendo, en una pose que contradice la posibilidad de un retrato que idealice a la modelo. Su cabeza está agachada y sus ojos miran hacia abajo, evitando cualquier comunicación...
with the seriousness of Cochez’s message about women and their relationship with their bodies.

Changing Stereotypes

Human beings have been the central focus in the work of Panamanian photographer Sandra Eleta who has achieved worldwide recognition for her sensitive portrayal of the inhabitants of Portobelo, where she has lived since the late seventies. It is a town on the Atlantic that was strategically important during the colonial period, and is today populated by the descendants of slaves, who have preserved unique traditions. Eleta has photographed them “invested with all their dignity and inner richness, never vulnerable or defenseless,”12 as her view of humanity is optimistic and solidarious.

The portrait of “Catalina” is one of the outstanding photographs of this series. An older woman, she was a proud “Queen of the Congos,” an important figure in local tradition, particularly in the celebration of Carnival. Moreover, according to Sandra Eleta, Catalina was “the last of her kind,” a real matriarch who took care of the community.13 Crowned with fresh hibiscus flowers and a shiny ribbon, she wears earrings of pounded gold with a proud initial “C” and a cross hangs from her neck. Her knitted blouse reveals a bare shoulder over which she looks at us directly, with closed lips that only insinuate a smile. Through Eleta’s lens, Catalina becomes an emblematic image of womanhood, racial pride and historic traditions.

Although she started out as a painter of Panama’s tropical exuberance, over time, Victoria Suescum became a more conceptual artist, creating images of signs and symbols in black, gray and white. Then, around 1998, she began painting bright colors and themes based on Panamanian folklore, vernacular art and commercial signage, cheerful images that initially belie the social messages they convey.

In Pantis Vikinis, Suescum quotes both a sign for the sale of bikini underwear from a South American public market and Leonardo Da Vinci’s 12 María Cristina Orive, “Sandra Eleta o la búsqueda de una identidad cultural” in Sandra Eleta: Portobelo (Buenos Aires: La Azotea, 1985), p. 3.
13 Sandra Eleta, in a conversation with Monika Kupfer, 23 January 2013.

Cambiando estereotipos

Los seres humanos han sido el centro de interés de la fotógrafa panameña Sandra Eleta, quien obtuvo reconocimiento mundial por sus sensibles retratos de los habitantes de Portobelo, donde ella ha residido desde fines de la década de 1970. Es un pueblo en la costa atlántica de Panamá que fue estratégicamente importante durante la colonia y que hoy está habitado por descendientes de esclavos, quienes han preservado sus excepcionales tradiciones. Eleta los ha fotografiado, “provistos de toda su dignidad y riqueza interna, nunca vulnerables o indefensos”,12 ya que su visión de la humanidad es optimista y solidaria.

El retrato de Catalina es una de las fotografías sobresalientes de esta serie. Una mujer vieja, Catalina fue una orgullosa “Reina de los Congos”, un personaje importante en la tradición local, en particular en la celebración del carnaval. Incluso, según Sandra Eleta, Catalina fue “la última de su especie”, una verdadera matriarca que cuidaba a la comunidad13. Coronada con flores de hibisco frescas y una cinta llamativa, ella porta aretes de oro amartillado con una honrosa inicial “C” y una cruz colgada del cuello. Su blusa tejida revela un hombro descubierto por encima del cual nos mira directamente, con labios cerrados que apenas insinúan una sonrisa. Vista a través del lente de Eleta, Catalina se convierte en una imagen emblemática de la feminidad, el orgullo racial y las tradiciones históricas.

Victoria Suescum fue en un principio pintora de la vegetación tropical exuberante de Panamá para convertirse, con el tiempo, en una artista más conceptual, creando imágenes de signos y símbolos en negro, gris y blanco. Después, por 1998, empezó a pintar colores brillantes y temas basados en el

12 María Cristina Orive, “Sandra Eleta o la búsqueda de una identidad cultural” en Sandra Eleta: Portobelo (Buenos Aires: La Azotea, 1985), pág. 3.
13 Sandra Eleta, en conversación con Mónica Kupfer, 23 de enero de 2013.
“Vitruvian Man,” of which she created a female, Panamanian version. According to the artist, she represents the type of Indian European conquistadors might have described: with a painted face, a nose ring and a feather skirt, semi naked and breastfeeding; barbaric and with an extraordinary body with four arms and jaguar-like heels...While in one hand she holds her baby, with the other extended arm she welcomes/receives an arriving European ship.14

It is an image in which a strong woman of color has conquered a space of her own. Suescum contrasts male and female, first tribes and conquerors, Europe and the New World. In the process, she makes a statement about the position of indigenous people and women in society, then and now.

Women, social expectations, and issues of race are at the core of Rachelle Mozman’s photographic series Casa de Mujeres (House of Women) for which she recruited her mother to represent several characters: “three women—a pair of twin sisters, one lighter in skin color, and a maid—[who] are a family, and they hold both love and contempt for each other in equal measure.”15

Las Damas (The Ladies) is a photograph of an aristocratic woman and her maid, who looks exactly like her but has darker skin, standing quietly in a wall-papered interior. Behind them, like props, are a bureau with a crucifix, an old photograph, and an unlit kerosene lamp. On the wall are oval portraits of a man and a woman in 19th century clothing, and on the left, an open door to a dark space. The viewer’s imagination is triggered into action, considering possible narratives, trying to decipher the realistic, yet staged scene and its characters. Mozman explores relationships: women and their mothers, employers and servants, dark and light, while questioning the idea of tradition and our constructions of history.

14 Victoria Suescum in an e-mail to Monica Kupfer, 13 January 2013.
Inner and Outer Landscapes

People’s relationships with their history is a theme the artist Susana Arias has considered in many of her works, which tend to be earthy and expressive, combining a solid physical presence with expressive content. Urban Reference No. 12 is part of the series Earth Works produced between 1985 and 1992.

Arias relates this sculpture to the ruins of the colonial city of Panama Viejo (Old Panama), which were at one time falling apart due to the effects of time but also to random human intervention. People living in the surrounding area would build their precarious houses by leaning walls of cardboard or zinc against the ancient ruins. The artist saw them as a “visual and cultural avalanche” because they triggered thoughts about the historic nature of Panama Viejo as a place for conquerors versus the simple reality of those who live there now. At the same time, she felt that the “massive, monochromatic walls of the Spaniards contrast with the shanty homes, the colorful laundry flying in the breeze and the wooden posts leaning on the tin to hold it up. It was magical.”

In creating these sculptures, Arias sought not to reproduce what she saw, but to evoke the emotions that vision caused in her. Visualizing landscapes—in outer space, in nature or in the mind—was a fundamental component of Teresa Icaza’s painting throughout her career. In her early work, she painted what looked like views of outer space, with floating planets or asteroids, or monolithic formations anchored to extraterrestrial landscapes. A concern for depicting light, often with mysterious effect, characterized all her paintings. In the 1990s, Icaza began creating lyrical, imaginary landscapes full of trees, often seen in silhouette against an illuminated background. Many of them had autumnal colors unrelated to her surrounding tropical environment.

By employing a combination of tissue paper, glue and oil paints, Icaza (who enjoyed painting on the floor with her canvas flat in front of her), would build rich surfaces of textured layers and transparencies. This technique came to the fore in works such as Kuna Tapestry, one of a limited number of paintings in which Icaza crossed personalajes. Mozman explora las relaciones: entre las mujeres y sus madres, los patrones y sus sirvientes, lo oscuro y lo claro, mientras cuestiona la idea de la tradición y nuestras construcciones de la historia.

Paisajes interiores y exteriores

Las relaciones de la gente con su historia y su entorno son un tema que la artista Susana Arias ha considerado en muchas de sus obras, que tienden a ser telúricas y poéticas, combinando una sólida presencia física con un contenido expresivo. Referencia urbana No. 12 es parte de la serie Earth Works creada entre 1985 y 1992.

Arias relaciona esta escultura con las ruinas de la ciudad colonial de Panamá Viejo, que se estaban derruyendo por los efectos del tiempo, pero también por la intervención fortuita de los seres humanos. Los residentes de la zona circunvecina construían sus casas precarias recostando paredes de cartón o zinc contra las ruinas antiguas. La artista las percibió como una “avalancha visual y cultural” porque provocan ideas sobre la naturaleza histórica de Panamá Viejo como un lugar de conquistadores, frente a la realidad simple de los que viven ahí ahora. Al mismo tiempo, sentía que “los muros masivos monocromáticos de los españoles contrastan con las casuchas, la ropa lavada colorida volando en la brisa y los postes de madera recostados sobre el tejado de lámina para sostenerlo. Era mágico”. Al crear estas esculturas, Arias no trató de reproducir lo que veía, sino de evocar las emociones que le causaba verlo.

Visualizar paisajes—en el espacio sideral, en la naturaleza o en su mente—fue un componente fundamental del arte pictórico de Teresa Icaza durante su carrera. En sus primeras obras pintaba lo que parecían vistas del espacio sideral, con planetas o asteroides flotando, o formaciones monolíticas ancladas en paisajes extraterrestres. La preocupación por representar la luz, a menudo con un efecto misterioso, caracterizó todas sus pinturas. En la década de 1990, Icaza empezó a crear paisajes líricos imaginarios llenos de árboles, generalmente en silueta contra un trasfondo iluminado, muchos de los cuales tenían colores ctoñales que no se relacionaban con su entorno tropical.

16 Susana Arias in an e-mail to Monica Kupfer, 19 January 2013.
over into full abstraction, allowing her intense colors and forms to fill the canvas. The title refers to the indigenous tribe in Panama whose women create “molas,” reverse-appliqué textiles in bright colors. This painting reflects Icaza’s understanding of color and a level of experience that marked a high point in her artistic career.

In years past, Amalia Tapia was known as a painter of personal imagery in lyrical compositions where objects from everyday life—symbols of her inner world—floated in dreamy, surrealistic spaces. Now she paints the Panama Canal, a subject seldom explored by Panamanian artists, for most of whom it represented a political thorn. The Canal is a personal subject to Tapia, who avoided the area for as long as it was occupied by the United States. She had been one of the students who marched into the Canal Zone on January 9, 1964 to raise the Panamanian flag, an act that triggered violent riots, leading to many deaths and injuries, and a break in diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In the 1990s, as the territory reverted to Panama, Tapia discovered a new landscape. Although it is considered a marvel of engineering, she depicts the scenery and even the machinery of the Canal with a poetic eye and an impressionist style, emphasizing the light and the atmospheric effects. In paintings such as Canal Expansion-Atlantic Tapia tackles views that show the construction of the broadened waterway currently underway, with its promise for Panama’s future. Everything is worthy of being recorded: the water, the sky and the clouds, but also the cranes, the tractors and the human force that is carrying out this major endeavor. Her paintings convey a sense of wonder with both nature and human achievement.

With a concern for nature and the environment, Donna Conlon’s Comfort Zone offers a view of Panama from inside the rain forest. Most of the videos she has created incorporate insects or found objects, often garbage, which she methodically collects and then uses in her artworks. With them, the artist makes statements against pollution, consumerism and urban chaos in videos that reveal an ironic sense of humor and sensitive cinematic timing. Her video “Coexistence” filmed the activity of ants carrying not only leaves, but also small flags of the countries in the United Nations, through the jungle. In other works, she is the main protagonist as she appears repositioning refuse, Empleando una combinación de papel de seda, cola y pinturas de óleo, Icaza (a la que le gustaba pintar en el suelo con su lienzo estirado enfrente), construía ricas superficies con capas texturizadas y transparencias. Esta técnica pasó a primer plano en obras como Tapiz cuna, una pintura de una serie limitada en las que Icaza cruzó la línea a la abstracción total, lo que permitía que sus lienzos se llenaran solo con sus formas y colores intensos. El título se refiere a la tribu indígena de Panamá a la que pertenecen las mujeres que hacen “molas”, textiles con aplicaciones de tela en colores vivos. Este cuadro refleja la comprensión de Icaza del color y un nivel vivencial que marcó un punto culminante en su carrera artística.

En años anteriores, Amalia Tapia fue conocida como pintora de imágenes personales en composiciones líricas donde los objetos de la vida diaria—símbolos de su mundo interior—flotaban en espacios surrealistas de ensueño. Ahora pinta el Canal de Panamá, un tema explorado rara vez por los artistas panameños, para la mayoría de los cuales ha representado una espinosa política. El Canal es un tema personal para Tapia, quien evitó la zona mientras estuvo ocupada por los Estados Unidos. Ella estuvo entre los estudiantes que marcharon hacia la Zona del Canal el 9 de enero de 1964 paraizar la bandera panameña, un acto que desató disturbios violentos y produjo muchos muertos y lesionados, así como la ruptura de relaciones diplomáticas entre los dos países.

A fines de la década de 1990, cuando el territorio de la Zona del Canal revirtió a Panamá, Tapia descubrió un nuevo paisaje. A pesar de ser considerado una maravilla ingeniería, ella pinta las vistas e incluso la maquinaria del Canal con ojo poético y estilo impresionista, realzando la luz y los efectos atmosféricos. En cuadros como Ampliación del Canal-Atlántico, Tapia aborda vistas que muestran la construcción en progreso de la ampliación del canal, con su promesa para el futuro de Panamá. Todo es digno de pintado: el agua, el cielo y las nubes, pero también las grúas, los tractores y la fuerza humana que está realizando este empeño. Sus pinturas transmiten una sensación de asombro ante el prodigio de la naturaleza y del logro humano.

Preocupada por la naturaleza y el medio ambiente, en Zona de confort, Donna Conlon ofrece una visión de Panamá desde el seno del bosque tropical. La mayor parte de los videos que ha creado incorporan insectos u objets trouvés, a menudo basura, que ella meticulosamente recoge y luego usa en sus obras de arte. Con esos objetos, la artista hace declaraciones...
curing destroyed trees with band-aids or walking in other people’s discarded shoes.

In *Comfort Zone*, Conlon is again the leading figure in a natural environment, into which an unexpected artificial element has been inserted. The stark crimson of the retractable belts and the chrome of the metal posts (like those used in banks or airports to keep people in line) contrast with the rich greens of the rainforest. As always, sound plays an important part: the snapping bands, the footsteps and the crunching underbrush are essential to the narrative. In a manner that is faithful to Conlon’s message throughout her oeuvre, the video makes a statement about the idiosyncrasies of human nature.

As evidenced by the works discussed in this essay, in Panama today, the fact that an artwork was created by a man or a woman is no longer a reason for determining quality or establishing difference. It is nevertheless true—even now, at the beginning of the 21st century—that most women artists still have to work hard to achieve a balance between their profession and social expectations as well as their roles as wives and mothers. On the other hand, although among artists the bias is less explicit than it used to be, in a Latin American country such as Panama, women are still fighting against discrimination in the work force as well as against deep-rooted traditions and, in some cases, misogynist attitudes that limit their possibilities for development. Women in Panama continue to be underrepresented in many economic and political sectors, including government, and their achievements in most fields are still missing in our history books. Exhibitions such as this one offer proof of their multifaceted concerns, their intelligence and their creative power.
The painter and sculptor Susana Arias was born in Panama in 1953. She spent her early childhood years in Rome, where her father was Ambassador to the Vatican, and the family lived surrounded by art. After finishing high school in Panama, she went to Tulane University in New Orleans, where her sculpture professor was Jules Struppeck, whom she describes as an inspirational force in her career choice. Arias has lived in Santa Cruz, California, since 1978, but has not lost her connection to Panama, where she visits and shows her work on a regular basis.

Her first one-person exhibition took place at the Instituto Panameño de Arte in 1977 in Panama, where she has held numerous exhibitions over the years in spaces such as the Museum of Contemporary Art, Arteconsult Gallery and Habitarne Gallery. Arias is a multifaceted artist who works with a broad range of materials and particularly enjoys mixing media in both her paintings and sculpture.

In 1987, Arias was awarded a (U.S.) National Endowment for the Arts Grant for her sculpture series Earthworks and in 1997, an “Environ Enhancement Award” from Cal Trans for her public art sculpture Finding our Past. In addition to her own work, Arias promotes the arts by organizing art events and volunteering in museums and schools in Santa Cruz. Her paintings and sculptures are in private and museum collections in the United States, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Panama.
Urban Reference No. 12 (Referencia urbana No. 12), 1986

cement, earth, ceramic, wood and acrylics (cemento, tierra, cerámica, madera y acrílicos)

15 x 34 x 12 ½ inches (38 x 66 x 32 cm)

Collection of the OAS Art Museum of the Americas
(Colección de la OEA Museo de Arte de las Américas)

Photo: Greg Staley
Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño was born in London, England, in 1911, but grew up in different places including the United States, China and Japan. She moved to Panama with her husband, the journalist and diplomat Julio Briceño, and became a Panamanian citizen in 1943. She studied under Juan Manuel Cedeño in Panama, Betty Bentz in the Canal Zone, and later in Rio de Janeiro (where she lived with her husband from 1958 to 1960) under Frank Schaeffer, a student of Fernand Léger.

Briceño’s first one-artist show took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1959 at the Central American Gallery. It was followed by numerous solo exhibitions over the years in Panama at venues such as the National Museum, the Jewish Welfare Board, the Librería Cultural, and the Panama-US Association. She had personal exhibitions at the Instituto Panameño de Arte in 1964, 1970 and 1978. Among her international achievements were a solo show at the Pan American Union in Washington, D.C. in 1969 and invitations to the Biennials of Sao Paulo in 1965 and Medellín in 1968. In 1970, she won an Honorable Mention in the Second Xerox Painting Competition in Panama.

In the late seventies, Trixie Briceño and her husband moved to Arizona, although she continued to send works to exhibitions in Panama. In 1982, the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Panama organized an “Homage to Trixie Briceño.” She died three years later in Sun City, Arizona.

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Beatrix (Trixie) Briceño
(b. 1911 - d. 1985)
The Dollies (Las muñecas), 1968
oil on canvas (óleo sobre lienzo)
36 x 45 inches (92 x 114 cm)
Collection of the OAS Art Museum of the Americas
(Colección de la OEA Museo de Arte de las Américas)
Photo: Greg Staley
Fabiola Buritica was born in Caldas, Colombia, in 1958. She moved to Panama City in 1984, and still lives there today, in a small apartment which is both her home and her studio. Buritica is a self-taught artist who describes herself as a painter, sculptor, composer, narrator and poet.

Buritica held her first solo exhibitions under the titles “Desnudez del mar” and “Luciérnaga” at Galería Arteconsult in Panama in 1994 and 1997. In 2006, she had shows at Edu Art Gallery and in 2007 at the Alliance Française in Panama. She has taken part in group exhibitions and auctions organized by Feria Jamboree, Expo Mujer, Banco Nacional, Ciudad del Niño, and Asociación Pro Niñez in Panama. In 1996, Buritica was one of the artists in the exhibition “Viva Panamá,” which travelled in 1996 to Quito, Ecuador, and Lima, Peru.

Buritica was selected for Panama’s National Painting Competitions, organized by the National Institute of Culture from 1994 to 1996, and in the three Panama Art Biennials from 1992 to 1996. In 1993, the Ciudad del Niño commissioned an edition of silkscreens by Buritica for their Ninth Annual Auction. She has received two awards for her paintings: an Honorable Mention in the Second Panama Art Biennial and an Honorable Mention in the Concurso Nacional de Pintura in 1996.
Fabiola Buritica  
(b. 1958 - )  
Freedom (Libertad), 2011  
mixed media con canvas (técnica mixta sobre lienzo)  
55 x 57 inches (140 x 145 cm)  
Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)  
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Coqui Calderón

Coqui Calderón was born in Panama in 1937. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Rosemont College in Pennsylvania in 1959, after which she moved to Paris to continue her studies at the Grande Chaumière and the Académie Julien over a three year period. From 1963 to 1968, she lived and worked in New York City.

In 1969, Calderón returned to Panama, where she has occupied an important position within the artistic community. Over the years, she has been a major promoter of Panama’s Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, one of the few institutional spaces for exhibitions of local and international art in the city. In 1985, Calderón moved with her family to Miami, where they lived for ten years, then returned to Panama, where she has been living and working ever since.

Calderón presented her first solo exhibition in 1960 at the Gibco store in Panama City. Since then, she has held over thirty one-artist shows. Starting in the 1960s, she has had numerous exhibitions at the Instituto Panameño de Arte, which later became the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, and at galleries such as Etecétera, Arteconsult and Mateo Sariel. Internationally, she has held exhibitions at the Pan American Union and the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, as well as in galleries in Lima, Bogotá, San Salvador, Boston and Miami.

Coqui Calderón nació en Panamá en 1937. Se graduó con una Licenciatura en Artes Plásticas de Rosemont College en Pensilvania en 1959, después de lo cual se mudó a París para continuar sus estudios en la Grande Chaumière y la Académie Julien durante un período de tres años. Luego, de 1963 a 1968, vivió y trabajó en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Calderón regresó a Panamá en 1969, donde ha ocupado un lugar notable en la comunidad artística. A lo largo de los años, ha sido una de las principales promotoras del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá, una de las pocas instituciones que ofrecen exposiciones de arte local e internacional en la ciudad de Panamá. En 1985 Calderón se mudó con su familia a Miami, donde vivieron durante diez años, para luego volver a Panamá, donde ha vivido y trabajado desde entonces.

Calderón presentó su primera exposición individual en 1960 en el almacén Gibco en la ciudad de Panamá. Desde entonces, ha tenido más de treinta muestras personales. A partir de los años sesenta, tuvo numerosas exposiciones en el Instituto Panameño de Arte, que luego se convirtió en el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, y en galerías tales como Etecétera, Arteconsult y Mateo Sariel. En el plano internacional, ha realizado exposiciones en espacios como la Unión Panamericana y el Museo de Arte de las Américas en Washington, así como también en galerías en Lima, Bogotá, San Salvador, Boston y Miami.
Coqui Calderón

(b. 1937 - )

Black Friday II (Viernes Negro II), 1989
acrylic on canvas (acrílico sobre lienzo)
46 x 60 inches (117 x 152 cm)

Collection of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Panama
(Colección del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá (MAC), Panamá)

Photo: Courtesy of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo
María Raquel Cochez was born in Panama in 1978, and studied at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), where in 2002 she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with a concentration in Fibers. Her first solo exhibitions were held in Panama in 2004 at La Bohème, in 2006 at La Casona and in 2009 at Diablo Rosso, three alternative spaces for contemporary art in Panama. In 2010, Cochez received SCAD’s Honor Award and in 2012, a grant from the New York Foundation for Contemporary Arts. She has held four additional solo exhibitions to date: “I Want Something Else” at Red Creative in Atlanta; “María Raquel Cochez: Photography” in El Salvador; and, in Panama, “Home is Where the Heart Is” at Diablo Rosso and “Little Fat Girl” at Los del Patio.

Cochez has been included in numerous group exhibitions in recent years. In 2012, she showed at the Sol del Río Gallery in Guatemala, as well as at Mateo Sariel Gallery and in “La Nueva” in Panama. In 2011, her work was shown as part of “The Idiots’ Dinner” and the Encuentro Internacional (Cheverista) in Medellín (Colombia); “Complemental” at Diablo Rosso; VALOARTE in San José (Costa Rica); “The Pleasure Is All Mine” at Lu Magnus Gallery, New York; and “Boom” at Picaflor Studios in Atlanta. In 2010, Cochez took part in the VII Visual Arts Biennial of the Central American Isthmus in Nicaragua; and the international art fairs “Art Panama” in Panama and CIRCA 10 in Puerto Rico.
María Raquel Cochez
(b. 1978 - )

Self Portrait with Burger (Autorretrato con hamburguesa), 2011
acrylic on canvas (acrílico sobre lienzo)
35 3/4 x 47 1/4 inches (91 x 120 cm)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Donna Conlon was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1966, and has lived in Panama since 1994. She holds a Master of Science in Biology from the University of Kansas and a Master of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art, in Baltimore. Her first solo show took place at the Galería DEXA of the University of Panama in 1997.

In 2002, Conlon did an artist’s residency at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. In 2003, she was awarded the Second Prize in the First Central American Emerging Artists Exhibition at the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo in Costa Rica, as well as a Residency Prize at the Caribbean Biennial in the Dominican Republic. One year later, Conlon won the First Prize of the IV Biennial of Visual Arts of the Central American Isthmus.

In 2005, Conlon was chosen to participate in the 51st Venice Biennial, both in the Arsenale exhibition, as well as the exhibition of the Italo-Latin American Institute. She has also taken part in the Auckland Triennial (2007), and the biennials of Panama (2008), Havanna, Cuba (2009), Pontevedra, Spain (2010), and Mercosul in Brazil (2010). Conlon has been awarded several grants, including one for emerging Latin American artists from the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation and, together with Jonathan Harker, a Harpo Foundation grant to develop new collaborative work. In 2011, Conlon was selected for “El Museo’s Bienal: The (S) Files” at the Museo del Barrio in New York.

Photo: J. Hacker, 2009
Donna Conlon
(b. 1966 - )
Comfort Zone (Zona de confort), 2010
HD video, 2’13” (video en alta definición)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Isabel De Obaldía was born in Washington, DC, in 1957, the daughter of a French mother and a Panamanian father. De Obaldía went to school in Panama and to university at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, where in 1979 she completed a degree with a double major in graphic design and cinematography.

She held her first two solo shows, of drawings, in Panama in 1977 and 1978. During the 1980s, she focused on painting and presented seven one-person shows. She also took part in many local and international group exhibitions, and represented Panama at events such as the Cuenca Biennial in 1987. De Obaldía began working as a glass artist after taking the first of many courses at the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington State in 1987. She attended workshops in Europe and the U.S., and continued exhibiting her paintings during that period. By 1993, she had acquired a glass kiln of her own and began to produce glass pieces in her studio in Panama. She soon became increasingly involved in the international glass art circuit.

De Obaldía has been producing ever-larger glass sculpture during the past two decades. In 2006, she was awarded a fellowship by the Creative Glass Center of America at Wheaton Arts in New Jersey and in 2009 she received a prestigious Rakow Commission from the Corning Museum in New York. In 2011, the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art held a retrospective exhibition of De Obaldía’s work as a painter and a sculptor.
Isabel De Obaldía  
(b. 1957 - )

*The Arms of Irga Tara (Los brazos de Irga Tara)*, 2002  
installation with glass sculpture and drawing on board  
(instalación con escultura en vidrio y dibujo sobre madera)  
79 x 32 x 8 inches (200 x 81 x 20 cm)

Collection of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Panama  
Photo: Courtesy of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo
Sandra Eleta was born in Panama in 1942. She studied Art History at Finch College and Photography at the International Center of Photography, both in New York City, where she also attended the New School for Social Research. Her first solo exhibition was at the Center for InterAmerican Relations in 1975. Since the late seventies, she has lived in Portobelo, where she founded the Taller Portobelo to promote artistic production among members of the local community.

Sandra Eleta started photographing the residents of the town in 1978, thereby initiating “Portobelo,” which would become her most famous photo essay. Over the years, she has created other photo essays such as “La Servidumbre,” with photographs of household servants in Spain and Panama, begun in 1975; “Las Campesinas,” of women in the Tonosí Valley in 1978; “Emberás, hijos del río” in 1998; “Los Abuelos” in 2001; “Cuando los santos bajan,” with photographs shot in Cuba, in 2004; and “Por los caminos de la piel,” with color photographs, in 2006.

In 1983, in collaboration with Toshi Sakai, Eleta created “Sirenata en B,” an audiovisual art work with slides, music and special effects, about a bus driver’s dreams. In 1991, she produced a video entitled “El Imperio nos visita nuevamente,” which juxtaposed the colonial invasion of Panama in the 16th century with the invasion by US troops in 1989. A year later, she presented the audiovisual Abya Yala at the Expo Seville 92 and in 1999, with artist Brooke Alfaro, she worked on “Comanche,” a photo essay and multimedia installation.

Photo: Monica E. Kupfer

Sandra Eleta nació en Panamá en 1942. Estudió historia del arte en Finch College y fotografía en el International Center of Photography, ambas en la ciudad de Nueva York, donde también hizo estudios en la New School for Social Research. Su primera exposición individual tuvo lugar en el Center for InterAmerican Relations en 1975. Desde fines de los años setenta ha vivido en Portobelo, donde fue fundadora del Taller Portobelo, que promueve la producción artística entre los miembros de la comunidad local.


En 1983, en colaboración con Toshi Sakai, Eleta creó “Sirenata en B”, una obra de arte audiovisual con diapositivas, música y efectos especiales en torno a los sueños de un conductor de autobús. En 1991, produjo el video titulado “El Imperio nos visita nuevamente” que yuxtaponía la invasión colonial de Panamá en el siglo XVI con la invasión por tropas estadounidenses en 1989. Un año después, presentó el audiovisual “Abya Yala” en Expo Seville 92, y en 1999, en colaboración con el artista Brooke Alfaro, trabajó en un ensayo fotográfico e instalación multimedia titulado “Comanche”.
Sandra Eleta  
(b. 1942 - )

Catalina from the Portobelo Series (Catalina de la serie Portobelo), 1978-2010  
silver gelatin photograph (fotografía en gelatina de plata)  
20 x 20 inches (51 x 51 cm)

Collection of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Panama  
(Colección del Museo de Arte de Contemporáneo de Panamá (MAC), Panamá)  
Photo: Debra Corrie
Ana Elena Garuz was born in Panama in 1971. She studied in the United States where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Georgia, and a Master of Arts in Painting from New York University. In addition, in 2002, she took part in a workshop with Arturo Duclos at the Universidad de Artes, Ciencias y Comunicación-UNIAC C in Santiago, Chile.

Garuz held her first one-artist exhibition at the Galería San Felipe in Panama in 1993. Since then, she has had other solo shows at the Bernheim (1996), Mateo Sariel (2004, 2007 and 2009), Diablo Rosso (2010) and Arteconsult (2012) galleries in Panama, as well as in 1998 at the Sylvia Conde Gallery in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

Garuz has received several awards in Panama, including an Honorable Mention at the Second Panama Art Biennial in 1994, and in the following year, a First Prize at the Concurso Nacional Ron Bacardí de Pintura Joven and an Honorable Mention at the Concurso Nacional de Pintura organized by the National Institute of Culture. In recent years, her work has been exhibited at fairs such as Pinta in London (2012), Arteaméricas in Miami (2012), and Art Brussels (2006). She has taken part in numerous group shows including “Cuenta Atrás 00-11” at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (2011) and “Abstracción Latinoamericana” at Arteconsult (2009) in Panama; and the VI Bienal de Artes Visuales del Istmo Centroamericano in Tegucigalpa, Honduras (2008).
Ana Elena Garuz
(b. 1971 - )

Untitled (SinTítulo), 1996
acrylic paint on 36 sheets of sanding paper (pintura acrílica en 36 hojas de papel lija)
51 x 95 inches (130 x 241 cm)
Collection of the Artist (Colección del artista)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Iraida Icaza was born in Panama in 1952. She studied Photography at the Rhode Island School of Design, and Sociology and Filmmaking at Newton College of the Sacred Heart. Icaza has lived and worked in Tokyo and New York, and currently divides her time between London and Panama.

Icaza’s work reveals a profound fascination with the natural world and scientific observation. Her first solo exhibition was held at the Instituto Panameño de Arte in 1978, and was followed by others in the 1980s at the Instituto Chileno-Británico in Santiago, Galería Arteconsult in Panama, the Contax Salon in Tokyo and Picture Photo Space in Osaka. In the 1990s, she showed her Colección 13 at Arteconsult and was awarded the “Premio Único de Escultura” at the IV Panama Art Biennial. Her photographic installations include “Entre-Seres” shown at the II Ibero-American Biennial in Lima, “Mirabilia I-VI” at the V Panama Art Biennial, and “Speculum Naturale” at the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo in Costa Rica.

Over the past decade, Icaza’s photographic series and installations have been exhibited internationally. They included “Variables” at the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, D.C., and at Mujeres en las Artes in Tegucigalpa, and “Rodin: All About Eve” at Kettle’s Yard in Cambridge, England. Other recent exhibitions in the UK include “Transparent Boundaries” at the Birmingham Museum, 2011-2012, and “Laterna Magica” at Rose Issa Projects, 2013. She was a curator for the inaugural exhibition at Casa Museo Endara in Panama in 2008.
Iraida Icaza
(b. 1952 – )

Untitled (Emmanuelle), Collection 13, 1996
(Sin título [Emmanuelle], Colección 13, 1996)
vintage C-print (1/3) (Impresión vintage, 1/3)
30 x 40 inches (76 x 102 cm)

Private Collection (Colección privada)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist

Inter-American Development Bank Cultural Center
Teresa Icaza was born in Panama City in 1940 and died there in 2010. Mostly self-taught, she took art lessons as a teenager, but her painting career really began in the sixties. At the time, Panamanian artists Antonio Alvarado and Mario Calvit became her friends and mentors, exposing her to the ideas of abstraction, and to the techniques for creating textures and collages, which became integral to her style of painting. Icaza’s first solo exhibition, held in 1973 at the Instituto Panameño de Arte, included 22 paintings in a lyrical abstract style.

In a career that spanned five decades, Teresa Icaza held more than forty solo exhibitions and took part in at least 60 group shows, both in Panama and abroad, in Central America, the Caribbean and South America, as well as in the United States and Europe. She was a tireless artist who produced a large volume of work, passing through a series of stylistic phases, in which color, abstract values and the representation of light remained her main interests, even when she ventured closer to realism in her imaginary landscapes.

Icaza won several distinctions during her career, including Honorable Mentions in the Xerox Contest of 1975 and Panama’s National Painting Contest in 1981, as well as the First Prizes in the National Painting Contest of 1985 and the Panama Refinery’s National Contest of 1987.

Teresa Icaza nació en Panamá en 1940 y falleció en la misma ciudad en 2010. Fue una artista prácticamente autodidacta y, aunque tomó algunas clases en su adolescencia, su carrera artística realmente se inició en los años sesenta. Fue un período durante el cual los artistas panameños Antonio Alvarado y Mario Calvit se convirtieron en sus amigos y mentores, exponiéndola a las ideas de la abstracción y a las técnicas para crear texturas y collages, que se convirtieron en elementos integrales de su estilo pictórico.  La primera exposición individual de Icaza, que fue en 1973 en el Instituto Panameño de Arte, estuvo compuesta por 22 obras en un estilo lírico abstracto.

En una carrera que se extendió a lo largo de cinco décadas, Teresa Icaza presentó más de cuarenta exposiciones personales y participó en más de sesenta colectivas, tanto en Panamá como en el exterior, en Centroamérica y el Caribe, como también en los Estados Unidos y Europa. Fue una artista incansable que produjo una obra voluminosa, pasando por una serie de fases estilísticas, en las que el color, los valores abstractos y la representación de la luz fueron siempre sus focos de interés, incluso cuando se acercaba más al realismo en sus paisajes imaginarios.

Teresa Icaza
(b. 1940 – d. 2010)
Kuna Tapestry (Tapiz kuna), 1991
oil and collage on canvas (óleo y collage sobre lienzo)
47 x 39 inches (120 x 100 cm)
Private Collection (Colección privada)
Photo: Hernán Santos
Amelia Lyons was born in Panama in 1883 and died in 1973. She was the daughter of a British father and Panamanian mother, both of whom died when she was a child. Amelia spent part of her youth in the home of her uncle Frank Lyons in London, where she had a rigorous education, including the opportunity to study music, drawing, painting and art history.

In 1903, Amelia Lyons returned to Panama, and in 1905 she married the Panamanian diplomat and statesman Ricardo J. Alfaro, who would become the country’s president in 1931-32. During their long marriage, she also accompanied him at posts such as Consul in Barcelona in 1908, Plenipotentiary Minister in Washington, D.C. in 1922, and United Nations Delegate in 1945.2

Amelia Lyons de Alfaro studied painting under Roberto Lewis at Panama’s Escuela de Pintura from 1913 to 1919, a time when she produced numerous portraits.3 Amelia had a second period of artistic production, during summer vacations in the early 1930s in the United States. In 1929-30, she studied under Italian-American artist Nunzio Vayana, in Maine, where she painted seascapes “in a more evolved technique, with greater variety and more color.”4 There is no evidence that Amelia Lyons de Alfaro ever showed her work in a public exhibition.

3 Author’s note: I had the opportunity to study Lewis’s original student rosters, courtesy of Adriana Lewis de Vallarino.
Amelia Lyons de Alfaro
(b. 1883 – d. 1973)
Portrait of a Young Girl (Retrato de una joven), ca. 1920
oil on wood (óleo sobre madera)
23 x 16 inches (58 x 41 cm)
Private Collection (Colección privada)
Photo: Hernán Santos
Lezlie Milson

Lezlie Milson was born in Green Bay, Wisconsin (U.S.) in 1958. She studied at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where she finished a Bachelor of Arts in 1980. Three years later, she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Design at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in the same city. From 1983 to 1987, Milson worked as a fashion designer in New York City. In 1987, she moved to Panama, where she still lives and works.

Milson had her first one-artist show in 1980 at the List Center in Providence. She has had numerous solo exhibitions in Panama: at the Galería Arteconsult (1996, 1997 and 2000), as well as at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (1999), Galería Enmarcante (2000), and Mateo Sariel Galería (2002, 2004, 2006 and 2009). She has also taken part, since the mid-seventies, in a long list of group shows in the U.S., Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica, Spain and Switzerland. In her work, Milson combines painting, sculpture and assemblage to produce objects, free-standing works and installations.

The awards Milson has received for her work include Honorable Mentions in the Panama Art Biennials of 1994 and 1996, as well the First Prize, Amicale Award, and the Tanner’s Council Award at RISD in 1983. She also won the Second Prize in the University of Wisconsin’s State Sculpture Competition in 1976, as well as a Purchase Award for the Permanent Collection of the University in 1975.


Los premios que Milson ha recibido por su trabajo incluyen Menciones de Honor en las Bienales de Arte de Panamá de 1994 y 1996, así como el Primer Premio del Amicale Award y el Tanner’s Council Award en la RISD, en 1983. También fue galardonada con el Segundo Premio del Certamen Estatal de Escultura en la Universidad de Wisconsin en 1976, así como un premio de adquisición para la Colección Permanente de dicha Universidad en 1975.
Lezlie Milson
(f. 1958 - )

Tellus Mater, 2002
installation - plaster, ink and lipstick (instalación - yeso, tinta y lapiz labial)
variable dimensions (dimensiones variables)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)

Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Rachelle Mozman was born in 1972 in New York City, the daughter of a Panamanian mother and a Polish father. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Purchase College at SUNY in Purchase, New York, in 1994, and a Master of Fine Arts at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia in 1998. She currently lives and works in both New York City and Panama.

Mozman’s first one-artist exhibition was held at the PH Gallery in New York City in 2003. She has presented other solo shows in the United States at Metaphor Contemporary Art in Brooklyn (2006), as part of the En Foco Traveling Exhibition Program of the Aguilar Library in New York (2010), Catherine Edelman Gallery in Chicago (2012) and the Camera Club of New York (2013). In Latin America, Mozman has had personal exhibitions at the Centro Cultural de España in Antigua Guatemala (2006), Sol del Río Gallery in Guatemala City (2009) and Arteconsult Gallery in Panama (2010).

Mozman was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in 1998 and a Prince Claus Award in 2009. In 2010, she participated in 31 Women in Art Photography, and in 2011, she took part in the “The (S) Files Bienal” at El Museo del Barrio in New York, in addition to receiving a Lens Culture Second Prize Award. She has been an artist in residence at the Chateau La Napoule, France (2008), a Light Work Residency in Syracuse, New York (2009), at Smack Mellon (2011), and at the Camera Club of New York (2012).
Rachelle Mozman
(b. 1972–)

Las Damas from the House of Women series, 2010
(Las damas de la serie casa de mujeres)
digital C-print (impresión-C digital)
19 x 21 inches (48 x 53 cm)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Roser Muntañola de Oduber was born in Barcelona in 1928 and moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina with her family when she was a child. She studied at the Manuel Belgrano School of Fine Arts (1941-44), the Prilidiano Pueyrredón Academy of Fine Arts (1944-48), as well as at the Academia Superior Ernesto de la Cárcova (1949-50) in Argentina, from which she graduated as Professor of Drawing and Painting. In 1951, she moved to Panama with her husband, the Panamanian artist Ciro Oduber, who had been in Argentina as an art student.

During the 1950s, Muntañola worked as a supervisor for Fine Arts Instruction in Panama’s Ministry of Education and as professor of drawing at the University of Panama. She had personal exhibitions at the National Library and the National Museum of Panama, and at the Vayreda Gallery in Barcelona. In 1953, she took part in a group show of Panamanian artists at the Pan American Union in Washington, D.C., where she and her husband were later invited to hold a joint exhibition in 1960. Muntañola also participated in the São Paulo Biennial in 1956 and had a one-person show at the Panamanian-U.S. Association in Panama in 1960.

In 1961, Roser Muntañola moved with her family to Barcelona, where she and her husband continued their careers as artists and professors. She still lives in Barcelona, where her most recent solo exhibition took place in 2011, at the Centre d’Art Contemporani i Sostenibilitat El Forn de la Calç.
Roser Muntañola de Oduber
(b. 1928– )
Children’s Games (Juegos de niños), 1960
oil on canvas (óleo sobre lienzo)
32 x 40 inches (81 x 102 cm)
Collection of the OAS Art Museum of the Americas
(Colección de la OEA Museo de Arte de las Américas)
Photo: Greg Staley
Amalia Rossi de Jeanine

Amalia Rossi de Jeanine was born in Argentina in 1926 and died in 1974. Through her marriage to Panamanian painter Juan Bautista Jeanine (who had lived in Buenos Aires as an art student), Rossi came to Panama in the early fifties, and soon became a naturalized Panamanian citizen. She held degrees in Drawing and Painting from the Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes de Buenos Aires, and in Mural Painting and Etching from the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes Ernesto de la Cárcova in the same city. She had also studied music at the Conservatorio de Buenos Aires, where she specialized in piano. In Panama, she was a professor at the Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas.

Rossi won the First Prize in the Annual Salon for Young Painters in Buenos Aires in 1952. She had one-artist exhibitions in Argentina, Panama and the Canal Zone and took part in group shows in Argentina, Brazil and Spain, in addition to representing Panama at biennials in Brazil, Mexico and Spain.

On two occasions, Rossi was the prizewinner of the mural contests organized by the Caja del Seguro Social in Panama, which granted her commissions to produce murals in the cities of La Chorrera and Colon. She and her husband were described as “the great creators of Panamanian muralism” by the writer José Franco. Together, they created murals at the San José Seminary in Las Cumbres, the Instituto Justo Arosemena in Panama and the Lotería Nacional building in Colon.


Amalia Rossi fue merecedora del 1er Premio del Salón Anual de Jóvenes Pintores en Buenos Aires en 1952. Tuvo exposiciones individuales en Argentina, Panamá y en la Zona del Canal, y participó en colectivas en Argentina, Brasil y España, además de representar a Panamá en las Bienales de Brasil, México y España.

En dos ocasiones consecutivas fue ganadora del premio del concurso de murales de la Caja del Seguro Social en Panamá, lo que le valió comisiones para crear murales en las ciudades de La Chorrera y Colón. Ella y su esposo fueron descritos como los “grandes creadores del muralismo panameño” por el escritor José Franco. Juntos hicieron los murales en el Seminario San José de Las Cumbres, los del Instituto Justo Arosemena en Panamá y los del edificio de la Lotería Nacional en Colón.
Amalia Rossi de Jeanine  
(b. 1926–d. 1974)  
*Fish (Peces)*, c. 1963  
tempera on paper (témpera sobre papel)  
13 1/2 x 18 inches (34 x 46 cm)  
Private Collection (Colección privada)  
Photo: Hernán Santos
Olga Sánchez

Olga Sánchez was born in the province of Bocas del Toro, Panama, in 1921. She first studied art in the 1940s under Manuel E. Amador in his studio. In 1953, she travelled to London and Amsterdam. She then went on to Barcelona, where she lived and developed her artistic career for the next 20 years. She was a student at the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes de San Jorge, studied ceramics under Alina Alós at the Taller de Ceramistas in Esplugues de Llobregat, and became a member of the Real Círculo Artístico, where she practiced drawing during all her years in Spain.

Olga Sánchez had one-artist exhibitions starting in 1960 at the Ateneo Barcelonés in Barcelona, the Instituto de Cultura Hispánica in Madrid and the Casa de América in Granada. She took part in numerous group shows including Barcelona's Bienal Hispanoamericana in 1955 and Salón Femenino de Arte Actual from 1967 to 1971. In Panama, over the years, Sánchez had numerous solo shows at the Instituto Panameño de Arte and the Galería Etcétera.

After returning to Panama in 1973, Olga Sánchez worked as an art professor at the Centro de Arte y Cultura, while continuing to produce her own work, mainly in drawings, oils and ceramic sculptures. Although her main focus has always been the human figure, Sánchez has also painted other themes, such as her interpretations of needy children in Biafra and her bullfighting scenes.

Olga Sánchez nació en la provincia de Bocas del Toro, República de Panamá, en 1921. Inició sus estudios de arte en los años cuarenta en el taller de Manuel E. Amador. En 1953, viajó primero a Londres y Ámsterdam. De ahí, siguió a Barcelona, donde vivió y desarrolló su carrera artística durante los siguientes veinte años. Fue estudiante en la Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes de San Jorge, estudió cerámica con Alina Alós en el Taller de Ceramistas en Esplugues de Llobregat, y fue miembro del Real Círculo Artístico, donde practicó el dibujo de manera regular durante todo su tiempo en España.


 Después de su regreso a Panamá en 1973, Olga Sánchez trabajó como profesora de arte en el Centro de Arte y Cultura, a la vez que continuó produciendo su propia obra, sobre todo dibujos, óleos y esculturas en cerámica. Aunque su enfoque primordial siempre ha sido la figura humana, Sánchez también ha pintado otros temas, tales como sus interpretaciones de los niños necesitados de Biafra y sus notables escenas de tauromaquia.
Olga Sánchez
(b. 1921 - )
Study (Estudio), 1995
oil on canvas (óleo sobre lienzo)
35 x 42 inches (89 x 107 cm)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)
Photo: Hernán Santos
Olga Sinclair was born in Panama in 1957, the daughter of renowned Panamanian artist Alfredo Sinclair, who was her first teacher. During the 1970s, she studied art at the Escuela de Artes Aplicadas y Oficios Artísticos and took drawing classes at the Estudios Arjona in Madrid, Spain. She returned to Panama in 1979, and in 1983 completed a Bachelor’s Degree in Interior Design at the Universidad Santa María La Antigua.


In 1982 and 1983, Olga Sinclair was awarded Honorable Mentions in the Bienal de Arte de Panamá-Azucarera Nacional and the ArteGulf Art Competition. In 1984, she spent a year in London, where she was able to visit museums and first saw the work of Francis Bacon. From 1987 to 1989, she lived in La Paz, Bolivia, and from 1989 to 1994, in Jakarta, Indonesia, where she continued painting and exhibiting. En 1994, she returned to live in Panama, where she currently directs the Olga Sinclair Foundation, an organization that promotes culture and cultivates talent in Panama’s children through artistic self-expression.

Photo: Pablo Robles

Olga Sinclair nació en Panamá en 1957, hija del reconocido pintor panameño Alfredo Sinclair, quien fue su primer profesor. Durante los años setenta, Olga estudió arte en la Escuela de Artes Aplicadas y Oficios Artísticos, y tomó cursos de dibujo en los Estudios Arjona de Madrid, España. Regresó a Panamá en 1979, y en 1983 se graduó con una Licenciatura en Diseño de Interiores de la Universidad Santa María La Antigua.


Olga Sinclair  
(b. 1957 - )  
Revelation (Revelación), 1999  
oil on linen (óleo sobre lino)  
78.7 x 63 inches (200 x 160 cm)  
Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)  
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Victoria Suescum was born in Panama in 1961. She earned a Bachelor of Arts from Wellesley College and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Texas at San Antonio. She also attended the New York Studio School and the Wesleyan University Program in Paris.

Suescum has held solo exhibitions at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (1986 and 1995) and the Mateo Sariel Gallery (2002) in Panama, as well as at the Instituto Cultural Peruano-Norteamericano in Lima (1993), the Center for the Fine Arts at Texas A&M International University (2006), the Museo Alameda (2007) and the Comminos Studio (2013) in San Antonio, Texas. She was included in the official delegation from Panama to the 50th Venice Biennial and in the exhibition “Crosscurrents Contemporary Painting from Panama, 1968-1998” shown at New York City’s Americas Society, the Bass Museum in Miami and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Panama. She also participated in the exhibition “Del Centro a la Isla” at the Casa de las Américas in Cuba, as well as in numerous other group shows in Panama, the United States, Europe and South America.

Suescum won a grant from the Department of Art and Cultural Affairs in San Antonio, Texas, in 1991 and did was an artist in residence at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire in 1993. She was a selected artist in the first five Panama Art Biennials, and prize-winner in the biennials of 1994, 1998 and 2000.

Victoria Suescum nació en Panamá en 1961. Cuenta con una Licenciatura en Artes del Wellesley College en Massachusetts y una Maestría de la Universidad de Texas en San Antonio. También hizo estudios en la New York Studio School y en el Programa de Wesleyan University en París.


Victoria Suescum  
(b. 1961 - ) 

Pantis Vikinis, 2002  
oil on canvas with inflatable frame (óleo sobre lienzo con marco inflable)  
62.5 x 54 inches (159 x 137 cm)  

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)  
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Amalia Tapia was born in Panama in 1946. She was a student at the Instituto Nacional, where she completed her high school degree in 1965. She carried out her university studies at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Panama, where as part of the design curriculum, she studied painting under the prominent artists Juan Manuel Cedeño and Guillermo Trujillo. She held her first solo exhibition at the Instituto Panameño de Arte in 1974, and a year later, received a grant from the Institute for International Education to visit museums in the United States.

In a career spanning almost four decades, Tapia has held twenty solo shows and taken part in numerous group shows. Her work has gone through several thematic phases and a progression from watercolors to a nearly exclusive focus on oil paints. In terms of her style, she has moved from realism to a personal brand of surrealism based on intimate subjects, and towards the end of the 1990s, she began to paint scenes of the Panama Canal in a language more closely linked to Impressionism.

Amalia Tapia has received several prizes for her work, including awards in the Cervecería Nacional’s juried shows of 1986 and 1990, and Panama’s National Painting Competition, organized by the National Institute of Culture, in 1981 and 1985. In addition to her successful career as a painter, Tapia is also a professor of flamenco dance.


Durante una carrera artística que se ha extendido por casi cuatro décadas, Tapia ha presentado una veintena de exposiciones individuales y participado en numerosas colectivas. Su obra se ha caracterizado por diversas fases temáticas y ha progresado del uso de la acuarela a una preferencia casi exclusiva por la pintura al óleo. En cuanto a su estilo, se ha desplazado del realismo hacia una versión personal del surrealismo con temas íntimos, y a fines de la década de los años noventa empezó a pintar escenas del Canal de Panamá con un lenguaje pictórico ligado al impresionismo.

Amalia Tapia
(b. 1946 - )
Canal Expansion-Atlantic (Ampliación del Canal - Atlántico), 2012
oil on canvas (óleo sobre lienzo)
48 x 60 inches (112 x 152 cm)
Private Collection (Colección privada)
Photo: Hernán Santos

Inter-American Development Bank Cultural Center
Alicia Viteri was born in Pasto, Colombia in 1946. She graduated from the School of Fine Arts at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá in 1970, and had her first solo show at the Galería Belarca in 1971. A year later, she and her husband moved to Panama, where in 1972, she had a one-artist show at the Instituto Panameño de Arte, as well as an exhibit of her prints on Panama City buses. Viteri taught Etching at the University of Panama and in 1979, she founded the Panarte Graphic Arts workshop, where she continued promoting printmaking in Panama. During her 40-year career, Viteri has had more than 20 solo exhibitions in galleries and museums in Bogotá, Cartagena, Santa Marta, Pasto and Barranquilla in Colombia, as well as in Panama, Caracas, Santiago, Quito, Boston, and New York. She has also taken part in numerous group shows, biennials and international events. In 1983, Viteri won an Honorable Mention at the Graphic Arts Biennial in Puerto Rico, and in 1986, the National Painting Prize at the 30th Salon de Artistas Colombianos. A year later, she was awarded an Honorable Mention at Integraflík ’87 in Berlin, and in 1993, she was a finalist in the Osaka Painting Triennial in Japan. Around 1990, for health reasons, Alicia Viteri discontinued her work with graphics and started focusing more on painting. In 1995, she began a series of canvasses based on natural landscapes. Since 2000, she has been working with new media, particularly digital art.
Alicia Viteri
(b. 1948– )

The Enamored Minister (El ministro enamorado), 1980
acrylic and collage on canvas (acrílico y collage sobre lienzo)
70 x 57 ½ inches (178 x 146 cm)

Collection of the Artist (Colección de la artista)
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist
Emily Zhukov

Emily Zhukov was born in Duluth, Minnesota in 1961. From 1977 to 1981, she studied at the Atelier Lack School of Fine Art in Minneapolis, as well as the University of Haute Bretagne in France. In 1983, she completed a Bachelor’s degree at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, and from 1984 to 1986, she continued her studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid. She finished a Master of Fine Arts at the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1991. Zhukov has lived and worked in Panama since 1994.

Although she was initially interested in painting, Zhukov has developed her artistic career mainly as a sculptor, first in clay, then metals including iron, bronze and aluminum. Over time, she started adding found objects or pieces made out of cement to her cast works, producing combinations and contrasts that were increasingly conceptual.

Zhukov has had solo exhibitions at the Arteconsult Gallery in Panama City in 1996, 1998, 2001 and 2008. She has also had one-artist shows at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in 2001 and Manolo Caracol in 2004, both in Panama City. She has participated in group shows since 1986 in galleries and museums in Spain, the United States and Panama. In 1998, she was a selected artist in the IV Panama Art Biennial. Zhukov has worked as an art professor at Florida State University and the International School of Panama.


Aunque inicialmente se interesó por la pintura, Zhukov ha desarrollado su carrera artística fundamentalmente como escultora, primero con barro y luego con metales incluyendo el hierro, el bronce y el aluminio. Con el tiempo, empezó a agregar objetos encontrados o piezas de cemento a sus obras vaciadas, creando combinaciones y contrastes cada vez más conceptuales.

Emily Zhukov
(b. 1961)

Saint Catherine (Santa Catalina), 2000
metal sculpture (escultura en metal)
24 x 24 x 5 inches (62 x 62 x 13 cm)

Collection of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Panama
(Colección del Museo de Arte de Contemporáneo de Panamá (MAC), Panamá)

Photo: Courtesy of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo
Gender @ the IDB: A Snapshot
El género en el BID: una instantánea

The IDB has an ambitious policy for gender equality which commits the institution to take advantage of opportunities to promote gender equality in its work in the region (gender mainstreaming), seek out investments that directly promote gender equality and women’s empowerment (direct investment), and avoid producing unintended negative consequences on gender equality via its projects (gender safeguard). In less than two years since the policy became effective in May 2011, the institution has made significant progress in the promotion of gender equality; the percentage of loan-financed projects which pay significant attention to gender by monitoring gender-related results, for example, has jumped from 9 to 27 percent. Learning events to build the capacity to promote gender equality have benefitted nearly 200 IDB staff and 400 professionals in the region.

Behind the policy and numbers are exciting programs. The Structured and Corporate Finance Division (SCF) and the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) have developed women entrepreneurship Banking (weB). The MIF will provide up to $5 million in technical assistance grants to transfer knowledge of effective lending models for women-owned Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and to train loan officers and credit managers in these products and services. SCF, through its beyondBanking program, will provide up to $50 million in credit lines, partial credit guarantees and risk-sharing mechanisms to strengthen institutions seeking to expand loans to women-owned SMEs. The first loan project under weB is well underway: $5.1 million of a $12.8 million loan to Banco Pichincha in Ecuador has already been disbursed.

The Gender and Diversity Division, together with the Secretariat for Social Inclusion in El Salvador, has developed the Women’s City (Ciudad Mujer) Project, which began execution in 2011. This $20 million loan operation seeks to improve the living conditions of Salvadoran women through one-stop-shop centers providing crucial services such as healthcare, services for survivors of violence...
against women, job training, entrepreneurship development, and community-based prevention of violence. The initial response to the project by Salvadorans has been overwhelming. The IDB is financing a rigorous impact evaluation in order to determine Ciudad Mujer’s effectiveness and fine-tune the initiative.

Beyond direct investment and promoting in across its operations, the IDB is disseminating knowledge about what works to promote gender equality. Two recent, high-profile events were the 2012 FOROMIC, which focused on challenges facing women microentrepreneurs, and the October 2012 conference Power: Women as Drivers of Growth and Social Inclusion, held in Peru with the participation of Hillary Clinton, Michelle Bachelet and Peruvian President Ollanta Humala. The latter event was co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the Peruvian Ministry of Social Inclusion.

Finally, the IDB is practicing what it preaches: the Bank is committed to promoting gender equality within our institution. The percentage of women at executive level positions has risen from 21 percent in 2009 to 29 percent in 2011 (on track to meet the Bank’s target of 38 percent by 2015); and the percentage of women in senior professional staff positions increased from 30 percent to 34 percent in the same period (on track to meet the Bank’s target of 40 percent by 2015).

Andrew Morrison
Chief
Gabriela Vega
Social Development Principal Specialist
The Gender and Diversity Division

Andrew Morrison
Jefe
Gabriela Vega
Especialista Principal en Desarrollo Social
División de Género y Diversidad
The IDB Cultural Center was established in 1992 to contribute to social development, showcase the artistic expressions of the IDB member countries, and bring understanding between Latin America and the Caribbean and the rest of the world.

Its programs are: Cultural Development Grants; Art Exhibitions; the Inter-American Concert, Lecture and Film Series; and the IDB Art Collection. Over the past 20 years, 560 cultural development grants resulted in over 70,000 direct beneficiaries; 490 concerts, lectures and films were attended by 110,000 visitors; 105 exhibitions attracted 130,000 guests; 1,725 works in the IDB Art Collection were shown in 19 traveling exhibitions to 84,000 visitors; 180 publications were produced; and some 8,900 press items were written about its activities. In 2010 the IDB Cultural Center received the Washington, DC Mayor’s Award for Visionary Leadership in the Arts.

The IDB Cultural Center thanks our thousands of partners and visitors for their contributions these past twenty years, and we look forward to greater synergy between culture and development.

El Centro Cultural del BID fue creado en 1992 para contribuir al desarrollo social, promover las expresiones artísticas de los países miembros del BID, y fomentar un entendimiento mutuo entre América Latina y el Caribe y el resto del mundo.

Sus programas son: Proyectos de Desarrollo Cultural; Serie Interamericana de Conciertos, Conferencias y Cine, Exposiciones; y, la Colección de Arte del BID. Desde su creación el Centro Cultural ha impulsado 560 proyectos culturales que ha resultado en más de 70,000 beneficiarios directos; presentado más de 490 conciertos, conferencias, y películas ante una audiencia de 110,000 visitantes; mostrado 105 exposiciones que atrajeron a más de 130,000 personas; y seleccionado alrededor de 1,725 obras de arte que forman parte de la Colección de Arte del BID que han viajado a través de 19 exposiciones itinerantes y han sido visitadas por 84,000 personas; ha producido 180 publicaciones; y obtenido 8,900 anuncios de prensa han sido escritos cubriendo estas actividades. En 2010, el alcalde de Washington D.C. en reconocimiento del papel de liderazgo en el medio cultural de la ciudad, le otorgó al Centro Cultural del BID el “Premio al Liderazgo Visionario en las Artes”.

El Centro Cultural del BID agradece la colaboración de nuestros socios y visitantes durante estos últimos veinte años, y espera seguir promoviendo una mayor sinergia entre la cultura y el desarrollo.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The IDB Cultural Center gratefully acknowledges the collaboration of all the individuals, institutions and government agencies that have made this extraordinary exhibition possible.
March 7 to June 2, 2013