

FELICIANO CENTURIÓN: ABRIGO

FELICIANO CENTURIÓN: ABRIGO

AMERICAS SOCIETY

AMERICAS
SOCIETY

EXHIBITIONS

ISBN 978-1-879128-45-3



9 781879 128453

FELICIANO
CENTURIÓN:
ABRIGO

AMERICAS
SOCIETY

EXHIBITIONS



Alejandro Leroux, Feliciano Centurión, c. 1989–92

abrigo, m. 1. overcoat; wrap. 2. shelter, sheltered place.
3. (mil.) shelter; cover. 4. (fig.) help, protection. 5. (mar.) harbor, inlet, cove. 6. (archeol.) small, shallow cave. 7. (Arg.) blanket; quilt.— **al a. de**, sheltered by, protected by, under cover of; **estar al a. de**, to be protected by; **a. antiaéreo**, bomb shelter.

CONTENTS

- 9 Foreword
Susan Segal
- 15 Abrigo
Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro
- 29 South American Jungle Tales
Aimé Iglesias Lukin
- 41 Exhibition Checklist
- 108 Exhibition History
- 114 Bibliography
- 119 Acknowledgments

FOREWORD

Americas Society is pleased to present *Feliciano Centurión: Abrigo*, the first institutional exhibition of the Paraguayan artist's work outside Latin America. Centurión was a key figure in early 1990s cultural circles in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was known for his engagement with folk art and queer aesthetics.

Now, some twenty years after his death, Feliciano Centurión's work is starting to attract the attention it deserves. As with many artists from Latin America, his work was not widely exhibited or collected in his lifetime. This exhibition, then, provides a much-needed opportunity to trace the short but vibrant career of a remarkable artist.

I am grateful to this exhibition's guest curator, Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, for his work in bringing Centurión to a New York audience. It is a pleasure to have him back at Americas Society, after his directorship here in 2000–2002. I welcome and congratulate Aimé Iglesias Lukin, Director and Chief Curator of Visual Arts at Americas Society. This exhibition is representative of the pioneering programming we expect from her tenure here.

I am thankful to Karen Marta and her colleague Todd Bradway for their editorial support and to Garrick Gott for designing this publication series. Diana Flatto, Assistant Curator, and Carolina Scarborough, Assistant Curator of Public Programs, deserve special recognition for their work to deliver high-caliber exhibitions and related events.

The presentation of *Feliciano Centurión: Abrigo* is made possible by the generous support of waldengallery, Galeria Millan, and Cecilia Brunson Projects. This exhibition is supported, in part, by public funds from

the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Additional support is provided by Sharon Schultz.

This exhibition presents works kindly lent by the artist's estate, represented by Cecilia Brunson Projects, and also by waldengallery, and institutions including the Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas at Austin; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Fundación Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid. We are also grateful to private lenders Amalia Amoedo, Estrellita B. Brodsky, Colección Brun Cattaneo, Adriana Cisneros de Griffin, Eduardo F. Constanini, Hochschild Correa Collection, Donald R. Mullins Jr., Raúl Naón, and other collectors who haven chosen to remain anonymous, and we extend our thanks to Mon Ross for allowing her documentary on Centurión's life and work, *Abrazo Íntimo al Natural*, to be shown as part of the exhibition.

On the occasion of *Feliciano Centurión: Abrigo*, Americas Society is publishing the

first comprehensive monograph on the artist's work, with the support of the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA).

Americas Society acknowledges the generous support from the Arts of the Americas Circle members: Estrellita B. Brodsky; Kaeli Deane; Diana Fane; Galeria Almeida e Dale; Isabella Hutchinson; Carolina Jannicelli; Diana López and Herman Sifontes; Luis Oganés; Gabriela Pérez Rocchietti; Vivian Pfeiffer and Jeanette van Campenhout, Phillips; Erica Roberts; Sharon Schultz; and Edward J. Sullivan.

SUSAN SEGAL
PRESIDENT AND CEO, AS/COA

ABRIGO

Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro



Alberto Goldenstein, *Feliciano Centurión* (from the series *Mundo del arte* [Art world]), 1993/2018

Feliciano sits at a table in one of Buenos Aires's glamorous old-world cafés or hotels. He looks directly at the camera with an expression that is both dramatic and seductive; his ringed fingers clutch his torso in an operatic contrapposto that could be entirely serious, or not. The iconic photograph by Alberto Goldenstein shows us the artist at the prime of a tragically short life: confident, handsome, realized. Within three years Feliciano Centurión would be dead, one of the countless victims of the HIV/AIDS epidemic that decimated an entire generation.

PARAGUAY: THE SUBTROPICAL JUNGLE
Feliciano Centurión was born in San Ignacio, in the southern region of Paraguay, close to the Argentine border. San Ignacio was one of the settlements created by the Jesuits in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Jesuit missions have often been characterized or romanticized as the softer face of colonization, with the Guaraní and Catholic traditions living in relative harmony. Regardless of

the degree of truth that supports this perhaps idealistic vision, the Jesuits did indeed bring the European Baroque to this region, and built many ornate churches that were decorated with hybrid indigenous/Catholic elements. This coexistence of Guarani and Catholic cultures forged a unique culture in Paraguay, a country that was emerging as a regional superpower until the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–70), in which neighboring Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, supported by European powers, devastated the country, killing 90 percent of the male population. After this war, Paraguay never recovered, and became something of a regional backwater, a landlocked republic that, in the popular imagination, was plagued by drug traffickers, Nazi war criminals, Islamic terrorists, and the long shadow of the thirty-five-year dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner. On the other side of this coin, however, is a country with the most ethnically mixed population in the Americas, one of the few countries where an indigenous

language, Guarani, is the official language spoken by 90 percent of the population, and with a distinct cultural heritage that is markedly different from the better-known civilizations of the Andes or Mesoamerica.

Centurión grew up in this context, in a household dominated by women, in which he learned to sew and crochet. As part of its complex cultural makeup, Paraguay is justly famous for its crafts, especially *ñandutí*, an elaborate handmade lace inspired by models imported from the Canary Islands during colonization and baptized with the Guarani word for “spider’s web.” As a young boy, Centurión was both attracted to the crafts traditionally associated with women, and also made to feel uncomfortable for not following more conventionally masculine interests. When the family moved to the border town of Alberdi, he attended the art school in Formosa, just across the Paraguay River in Argentina. As a student he made fairly conventional still lifes and landscapes, albeit with a certain moody intensity. His teacher

encouraged him to follow his dreams and continue his artistic career in a bigger city.

BUENOS AIRES: THE URBAN JUNGLE

In 1980 Centurión moved to Buenos Aires to study at the national art schools. More important than the training, which was somewhat traditional, was the vibrant cultural milieu in which he now found himself. By the mid-1980s, Argentina was emerging from a brutal dictatorship, and artists and intellectuals were enjoying new freedoms and expressive possibilities. The previous generation was largely defined by its opposition to the military regime, and this broadly societal concern shaped the art scene, from expressive tortured figuration to intellectually encoded conceptualism. In a newly democratic society, the political focus shifted from the general to the specific, from the sociological to the intimate. The artist Marcelo Pombo, a friend of Centurión's, famously defined politics at the time as the square meter immediately surrounding the artists: friends,

family, neighbors. This was where politics was manifested and where it could be effective.

Centurión felt liberated not only by this new artistic spirit, but also by the ability to be open in his sexuality. These issues were closely related: as the expression of individual subjectivity, sexuality itself became a contested site, as evidenced by the phrase, *The personal is the political*. What, after all, was the point of political freedom if it couldn't be expressed at the most personal and everyday level?

In the late 1980s a small and unassuming university cultural center, the Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas (El Rojas), became the epicenter of an unexpected revolution in the visual arts. Under the directorship of the artist Jorge Gumier Maier, El Rojas championed a new generation of artists whose shared concerns included the everyday, self-expression, an interest in kitsch aesthetics, and an exuberant, almost Baroque, aesthetic. Centurión became a core member of this group of artists, showing several times at El Rojas, and in many

ways exemplifying the aesthetic choices of that generation. Around this time, he stopped producing expressive figurative paintings (many with homoerotic overtones) and started to engage with fabric, crochet, and embroidery. He would often go hunting for kitsch domestic doilies and tablecloths in Once, the popular fabric district of Buenos Aires, reveling in their bright colors and ornate sentimentalism.

In the early 1990s Centurión started painting exotic animals on the large, cheap synthetic blankets used for household packing and for shelter by the homeless. The contrast between the poverty of the material and the exuberance of the bold and expressive animals shows a remarkable confidence and originality for such a young artist. Some of the animals depicted relate directly to Centurión's subtropical origins: *yacares* (small crocodiles), lizards, and *surubí* (large river fish native to the region). Others are more clearly fantastical, such as a series of octopuses, jellyfish, and anemones. For a related series, Centurión purchased blankets

whose designs featured exotic scenes of tigers, deer, and other animals, and painted over the preexisting patterns to further exaggerate the excessive cuteness of their mass-market appeal. In both series, Centurión brought together two apparently opposed universes: the natural and the urban, the organic and the synthetic.

THE POETICS OF AFFECT

As Centurión continued his exploration of popular and folk fabrics and traditions, he began to engage more with embroidery and crochet. In many works he would take a preexisting pillowcase, coaster, apron, or tablecloth, and add a poignant hand-stitched phrase. These phrases or aphorisms tend to concern love, with such declarations as *Te quiero* (I love you) and *Descansa tu cabeza en mis brazos* (Rest your head in my arms). Others evoke more abstract states such as *Añoranza* (Longing) and *Ensueño* (Dream), and another subset uses religious references such as *El cielo es mi protección* (Heaven is my protection) and *Tu presencia se confirma en*

nosotros (Your presence is confirmed within us). In all of these works there is a tender wish to expose intimate emotions in a direct way, using the traditionally feminine medium of embroidery. Centurión's engagement with popular aesthetics also disarms the viewer, as many of us have memories of precisely this kind of crocheting or embroidery in our grandparents' or family homes, but we don't expect to encounter it in contemporary art.

In bringing affection and love to the center of his practice, Centurión was making a strong political statement, but one grounded in the politics of affection, relationships, and intimacy. Discarded or forgotten objects were recovered and given new meaning by carrying heartfelt messages, in a series of small acts with potentially large consequences.

AIDS AND THE POETICS OF DEPARTURE

After Centurión was diagnosed with HIV, at a time when there was no accessible treatment, he began to incorporate references to his illness

in his work. In common with Félix González-Torres, ACT UP, José Leonilson, and General Idea, Centurión used his art to register the toll of illness on his body, and also provide a counternarrative to the "gay plague" hysteria in the mass media.

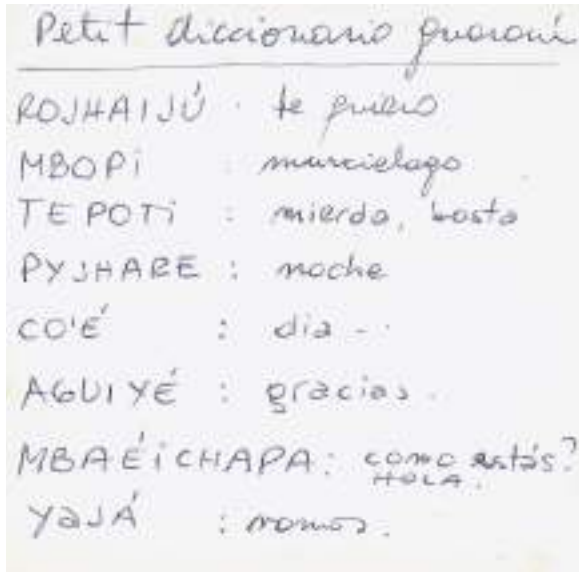
Death and religion started to appear regularly in the phrases Centurión applied to his works. His Christian faith seems to have become more pronounced or at least more visible through the frequent use of the cross or even, in one work, a sacrificed lamb (a common metaphor in the Catholic tradition). In the final series of pillows he made while hospitalized, he added the phrase "Luz divina del alma" (Divine light of the soul), as though recovering the beauty of the human soul as his physical body was decaying out of existence.

After his arrival in Buenos Aires, south of his native Paraguay, Centurión suffered from the cold winters of the Río de la Plata region. His search for warmth—physical and emotional—characterized his short but brilliant career. In a

particularly humorous series, he dressed dolls and dinosaurs in hand-crocheted garments, thereby neutralizing their fierce postures and expressions, and feminizing and domesticating them. In a career defined by various forms of marginalization, from his Paraguayan origins to his sexuality to his interest in popular and folk traditions, Centurión's form of activism and resistance was intimate and affective, focusing on love, spirituality, and humor—the shelter, or *abrigo*, that art can provide in a hostile world.

**SOUTH AMERICAN
JUNGLE TALES**

Aimé Iglesias Lukin



Feliciano Centurión, “Petit diccionario guaraní” (Little Guaraní dictionary),” n.d. Archive Elizabete Costa

“Rojhaijú: te quiero [I love you]” reads the first entry of the “Little Guaraní Dictionary” handwritten by Feliciano Centurión on a small piece of paper given to his friend Bete Costa.ⁱ Affect and Paraguay are the two key aspects through which to read the art of Centurión, a small but powerful body of work in which love, friendship, and community are central themes, made manifest using textile techniques of popular origin that depict the flora and fauna of the region’s subtropical jungle.

Born and raised in the rural towns and small cities of the Paranaense Forest, which covers Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil, Centurión moved after high school to Buenos Aires in the mid-1980s. Quickly inserting himself in local art circles, he played an important role in the activities of the Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas from 1989 onward, while maintaining an active relationship with Paraguay, where he exhibited and traveled often. The urban jungle of post-dictatorship Buenos Aires offered him the openness and inclusiveness in which to develop

his work and to live as a queer man, while his iconographic imaginary, inspired by the natural jungle of his native Paraguay, brought attention to his work in the city and beyond. This unique combination of the rural and the metropolitan, the traditional and the popular, of sentiment and witticism, make his work both a product of its time and a unique reinterpretation of Paraguayan traditions.ⁱⁱ

The late 1980s and early 1990s constitute a pivotal moment in South American culture. In a world already shaken by the fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the Soviet Union, many countries in the region saw the return of democracy and the beginning of neoliberal politics. In a metropolis like Buenos Aires, the openness after years of censorship and repression translated into a bursting cultural scene in which underground circles rapidly grew, even coming to the attention of the mainstream media. Pop, kitsch, and queer aesthetics played key roles in the literature, theater, cinema, and arts of the period, which, in many cases, took

multidisciplinary form. Leaving a profound mark on regional culture as well, this period is key to understanding much contemporary artwork, and is only recently coming within the purview of academia and art institutions. In the United States, key precedents of such studies in the visual arts can be found in the recent exhibitions *Recovering Beauty: The 1990s in Buenos Aires*, held at the Blanton Museum of Art of the University of Texas at Austin, in 2011, and *José Leonilson: Empty Man*, held at Americas Society in 2017–18.

Representing his north–south biographical itinerary, Feliciano Centurión offers us a body of work that is unique in 1990s South American art, in which kitsch aesthetics and queer affect are conducted through the appropriation of traditionally feminine textile techniques such as embroidery and *ñandutí* lace. His iconography is equally distinctive: flowers and animals from his native Paraguay are combined with tigers, deer, octopuses, and dinosaurs from the cheap blankets and plastic toys he used in his work.

Centurión's path was preceded—in the inverse direction and eighty years before—by the Uruguayan writer Horacio Quiroga, who moved from Buenos Aires to the rainforest in Misiones province and published, in 1918, the famous book *Cuentos de la selva* (*Jungle Tales*), a collection of short horror stories in which animals talk and nature is presented as dangerous and almighty in the face of the human desire for domination.ⁱⁱⁱ In the case of Centurión, the effect is the opposite: the natural world he grew up in is presented as playful, naive, and kitsch. Nature is not threatening but still powerful and magical, and, in fact, it is precisely through the ancient cultural connection to nature—the magical ritual—that the work of Centurión can be better understood, not only as beautiful but also as powerfully political. The art critic Claudio Iglesias writes:

The flora and fauna of Paraguay, the different forms of the esoteric, and the reclaiming of artisan[al] techniques thus form a constellation

in which the problems of globalization could find a peculiar response, in terms different both from the stock phrases of global neoconceptualism and from any attempt of cultural reaction in terms of local conditioning. To speak of magic and ritual, in this sense, is to speak of cultural agency in a wider sense.^{iv}

What led Centurión to combine the real fauna and flora of his homeland with an expanded bestiary from other climates? Part of the answer is practical, as, in some of his works, he painted over the animals that decorate the cheap blankets sold in the discount stores of Buenos Aires. But a more insightful answer would reveal Centurión's understanding of the fact that both fiction and the mythical are necessary parts of his message about nature. His depictions of plants and animals constitute a garden of delights in which memory and imagination work equally to uphold his Paraguayan identity and assert his rightful place, not only in the Buenos Aires art scene but also in Brazil

and Cuba, and internationally. His position in Buenos Aires was, after all, that of a migrant, and he wore his Paraguayan origins politically, using his identity to break down barriers and initiate dialogues with those who encountered his work.

His work narrates stories of the self—his love life, his disease^v—but also stories of a cultural body searching for a new political expression in a changing world. If this expression could not, in the 1990s, take its place among the great discourses that had shaped postwar artistic ideologies, Centurión and his generation found a path through the personal, the local, the folkloric and the popular, a path that gave voice to queer identities in every sense of the term.

In a 1994 letter to Bete Costa, Centurión celebrates the attention his work is receiving and imagines “a newspaper article that would tell ‘of how a Paraguayan born in San Ignacio de las Misiones in 1962 becomes an artist in 1990s Buenos Aires’ or, like the advertisement for

Virginia Slim cigarettes, ‘You’ve come a long way, baby.’”^{vi} And yes, while he never lost sight of his roots, Centurión certainly did come a very long way.

ENDNOTES

- i Feliciano Centurión, “Petit diccionario guaraní,” n.d. Archive Elizabeth Costa.
- ii See, in this regard, Ticio Escobar, “Extreme Ornamentation,” in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro and Fabiana Werneck, eds., *33rd Bienal de São Paulo: Affective Affinities* (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 2018), 1–8.
- iii See Horacio Quiroga, *South American Jungle Tales*, trans. Arthur Livingston (New York: Duffield, 1922), and Noé Jitrik, *Horacio Quiroga: una obra de experiencia y riesgo* (Sáenz Peña: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, 2018).
- iv Claudio Iglesias, “Autobiografía, hiperestesia y ritualidad: Feliciano Centurión y algunos posicionamientos subyacentes a la objetualidad de los noventa en Argentina,” in *Vínculos rituales y retazos de magia. Una antología de Feliciano Centurión en diálogo con Liliana Maresca, Omar Schiliro y Fernanda Laguna* (Buenos Aires: Galería Alberto Sendrós/arteBA, 2010).
- v Centurión was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 1996; he died on November 7 of that year.
- vi Feliciano Centurión, letter to Bete Costa, March 24, 1994. Archive Elizabeth Costa.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



Cangrejos (Crabs), 1990–93. Acrylic on blanket, 88 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 76 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (224.2 \times 194.9 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



De la serie Mantas (Langostinos) (From the bedspread series [shrimps]), n.d. Acrylic on blanket, 83 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 74 inches (213 \times 188 cm). Private collection, Miami



Pulpo violeta (Purple octopus), 1993. Acrylic on blanket, 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 74 inches (200 \times 190 cm). Collection of Adriana Cisneros de Griffin



Medusas (Jellyfish), 1994. Acrylic and crochet on blanket, 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 74 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (200 \times 190 cm). Fundación Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid



Surubí, 1992. Acrylic and enamel on blanket, 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 74 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
(200 \times 190 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Familia de dinosaurios (Family of dinosaurs), c. 1990. Plastic toys with crochet, variable dimensions. Private collection, New York



Estrella del mar (Sea star), c. 1990. Embroidery on blanket and acrylic paint, 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 15 inches (49 \times 38 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centuri3n



De la serie Mantas (From the bedspread series), 1994. Acrylic on blanket, 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ \times 22 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (63.2 \times 56.5 cm). Private collection, New York



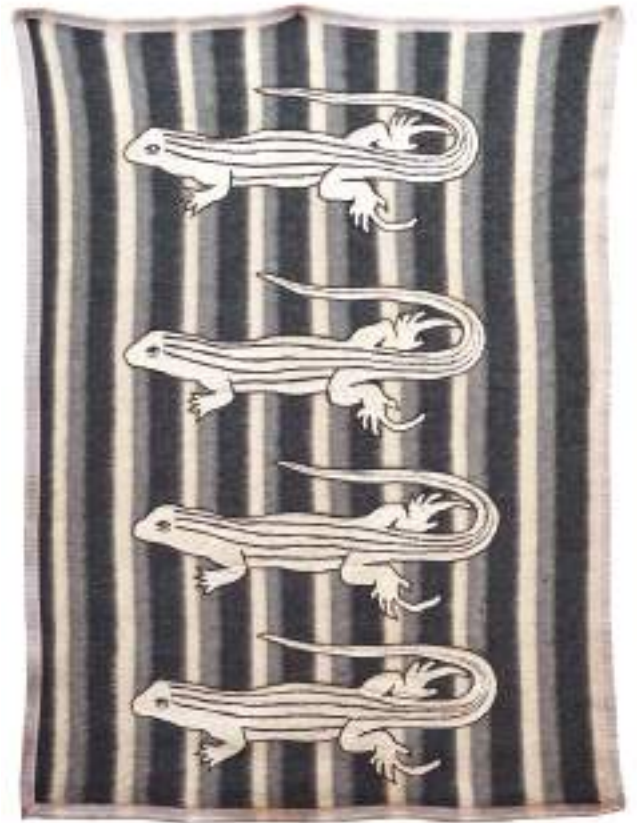
De la serie Frazadas (From the blanket series), 1994. Acrylic on blanket, 92 \times 78 inches (233.7 \times 198.1 cm). Private collection, New York



Untitled, 1994. Acrylic on blanket, $19 \frac{3}{4} \times 20 \frac{7}{8}$ inches (50.2 \times 53 cm).
Private collection, New York



Untitled (Deer), 1994. Acrylic on blanket, $23 \frac{7}{8} \times 19 \frac{3}{4}$ inches
(60.6 \times 50.2 cm). Private collection, New York



Lagartijas (Lizards), 1990–93. Acrylic on blanket, 77 ½ × 57 ½ inches (196 × 145 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Tigres (Tigers), 1993. Acrylic on blanket. 70 ⁷/₈ × 72 ³/₄ inches
(180 × 185 cm). Private collection, Buenos Aires



Ave del paraiso florecido (Bird of flowering paradise), c. 1995.
Embroidery on fabric, 16 ½ × 22 ½ inches (42 × 57 cm). Private
collection, London



Dichoso sera el pajarito ... (Blessed will be the little bird ...), c. 1995. Embroidery on pillow case, 17 x 26 inches (43.2 x 66 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Ensima de esta flor (On top of this flower), c. 1995. Embroidery on fabric, each 17 x 26 inches (43.2 x 66 cm). Collection of Raúl Naón, Buenos Aires



Flores del mal de amor (Flowers of lovesickness), 1996. Six embroideries on fabric, each 12 ½ × 26 inches (32 × 66 cm). Eduardo F. Costantini Collection, Buenos Aires



Estoy vivo (I am alive), 1994. Embroidery on fabric, 18 × 20 inches (46 × 51 cm). Collection of Estrellita B. Brodsky



El cielo es mi protección (Heaven is my protection), 1995. Embroidery on fabric, 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (45 \times 46 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centuri3n



Descansa tu cabeza en mis brazos (Rest your head in my arms), 1995. Embroidery on fabric, 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches (54 \times 47 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centuri3n



Que en nuestras almas no entre el terror (May fear not enter our souls), 1992. Embroidery on fabric, 14 ½ × 16 ½ inches (37 × 42.5 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Estoy despierto (I am awake), 1990–93. Acrylic paint and thread on natural and synthetic fibers, $13\frac{1}{4} \times 10 \times \frac{1}{4}$ inch (33.3 × 25.4 × 0.6 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York



Germinar (Germinate), c. 1990. Embroidery on fabric, $10\frac{3}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ inches (27 × 32 cm). Private collection, New York



Flor (Flower), c. 1990. Ñandutí on blanket, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (30 \times 35 cm). Private collection, New York



Florece (Flourishes), 1990–93. Embroidery and thread on natural and synthetic fibers, 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (8.9 \times 54.6 \times 1 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York



Busco refugio (I seek shelter), 1990–93. Embroidered fabric on blanket, 20 ½ × 20 ½ inches (52 × 52 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Paraiso florecido (Flowering paradise), c. 1995. Embroidery on blanket, 15 ¾ × 15 ¾ inches (40 × 40 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Ensueño (Dream), 1995. Embroidery on fabric, 19 ³/₄ × 19 ³/₄ inches (50 × 50 cm). Hochschild Correa Collection



Tu presencia se confirma en nosotros (Your presence is confirmed in us), n.d. Ñandutí on blanket, 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (53 \times 54 cm). Collection of Amalia Amoedo, Buenos Aires

Florece mi corazón (My heart flowers), 1992. Embroidery on fabric, 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ \times 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (57 \times 53 cm). waldengallery, Buenos Aires



Eres una flor única (You are a unique flower), 1994. Embroidery on fabric, 81 ½ × 59 inches (207 × 150 cm). Hochschild Correa Collection



Gallinas (Chickens), c. 1990. Embroidered woven coasters on blanket, 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ \times 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (57 \times 44 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centuri3n



Añoranza (Longing), n.d. Embroidery on fabric, 19 ¼ × 16 ½ inches
(49 × 42 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Mi casa es mi templo (My house is my temple), 1996. Embroidery on fabric, 13 × 26 inches (33 × 66 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Vivir es todo sacrificio (Living is all sacrifice), 1996. Embroidery on fabric, 21½ × 17 inches (55 × 43 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Corazón marchito (Withered heart), c. 1994. Embroidery on blanket with crochet, 35 × 34 inches (89 × 86.5 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Florece (Flourishes), 1995. Embroidery with inclusion on blanket, 24 3/8 × 21 1/4 inches (62 × 54 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Las flores llenan de perfume (The flowers fill with perfume), c. 1995. Embroidered cloth patch with intervention on blanket, 23¼ × 20½ inches (59 × 52 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Escucha el latido de tu corazón (Listen to the beat of your heart), c. 1995. Embroidery on blanket, 11⅞ × 11⅞ inches (30 × 30 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Cordero sacrificado (Sacrificed lamb), 1996. Acrylic on polyester blanket, 93 × 51½ inches (236.2 × 130.8 cm). Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin



La muerte es parte intermitente de mis dias (Death is an intermittent part of my days), 1990. Embroidery on fabric, 19 ½ × 27 ½ inches (50 × 70 cm). Collection of Donald R. Mullins Jr.



Renazco a cada instante (I am reborn at every moment), 1995. Embroidery on fabric, 13 ¾ × 20 ½ inches (35 × 52 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



En el silencio del descanso . . . (In the silence of my rest . . .), c. 1996.
Embroidery on fabric, 18 × 21 inches (43 × 74 cm). Collection of
Raúl Naón, Buenos Aires



Mis globulos rojos aumentan (My red blood cell count increases),
c. 1996. Embroidery on fabric, 16 ½ × 27 ½ inches (42 × 70 cm).
Colección Brun Cattaneo, Buenos Aires



Soy alma en pena (I am a soul in pain), 1995. Embroidery on fabric, 23 × 16½ inches (59 × 42 cm). Estate of the artist; familia Feliciano Centurión



Reposa (Rest), c. 1996. Hand-embroidered pillow, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 15 inches (22 \times 38 cm). Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin



Luz divina del alma (Divine light of the soul), c. 1996. Hand-embroidered pillow, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 15 \times 3 inches (22.2 \times 38 \times 7.3 cm). Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin



Soledad (Solitude), c. 1996. Hand-embroidered pillow, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ \times 16 inches (26 \times 43 cm). Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin

Sueña (Dream), c. 1996. Hand-embroidered pillow, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (22 \times 31 cm). Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin

mis ojos están abiertos al brillo de Dios
de lo más osuro surge la luz
Solo el tiempo puede curar
un corazón
Renazco a cada instante



Mon Ross, *Abrazo íntimo al natural* (Intimate embrace naturally), 2016. Film

EXHIBITION HISTORY

Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 *Feliciano Centurión: I am Awake*, Cecilia Brunson Projects, London, United Kingdom
- 2018 Solo artist presentation, *33rd Bienal de São Paulo: Affective Affinities*, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2016 National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland
- 2013 *Feliciano Centurión: Las intensidades de la belleza*, Centro Cultural de España “Juan Salazar,” Asunción, Paraguay
- 2012 *Bocetos y dibujos. Papeles previos* by Feliciano Centurión, Alberto Sendrós Gallery, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2004 *Feliciano Centurión*, Galería Alberto Sendrós, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1999 *Feliciano Centurión – Últimas obras*, Centro Cultural de España Juan Salazar, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1997 Galería Ruta Correa, Freiburg, Germany
- 1996 *Retrospectiva*, Centro de Artes Visuales Isla de Francia, Asunción, Paraguay
- Salón Hugo del Carril – Premio Fundación Banco de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1994 *Estrellar*, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Arte, sociedad y reflexión: Quinta Bienal de La Habana mayo 1994*, Havana, Cuba
- Feliciano Centurión*, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Frío / Caliente, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires, Argentina

- 1993 *Feliciano Centurión*, La Galería, Manzana de la Rivera y Centro Cultural de la Ciudad, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1992 *Pinturas: Feliciano Centurión*, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 5 años en el Rojas*, Galería del Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1991 *Al natural*, Pequeña Galería, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1990 *Frazadas Feliciano Centurión*, Galería Fábrica, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1987 *Pintura de Feliciano Centurión*, Galería Arte Sanos, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1985 *Visiones*, Sala de Exposiciones Aerolíneas Argentinas, Formosa, Argentina
- Pintura fresca*, Sala de Exposiciones Aerolíneas Argentinas, Formosa, Argentina

Group Exhibitions

- 2019 *Portadores de sentido: Arte Contemporáneo de la Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico
- 2011 *Recovering Beauty: The 1990s in Buenos Aires*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas
- Arte argentino actual en la colección de MALBA*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2009 *El rojas: 20 años de artes visuales*, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

- 2009 *Escuelismo. Arte argentino de los 90*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2007 *4 años: Colectiva*, Galería Alberto Sendros, arteBA 07, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Arte contemporáneo. Donaciones y adquisiciones MALBA-Fundación Costantini, Malba, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2005 *Exposición de Ayuda Positiva*, House of Lisa Swart of Fadul, Asunción, Paraguay
Diverse and Similar, Centro Cultural de España “Juan Salazar,” Asunción, Paraguay
- 2002 *Subjetiva. Belleza y felicidad en retrospectiva 1999–2002*, Galería Belleza y Felicidad, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1999 *Szene Buenos Aires* (Scene Buenos Aires), Galerie Ruta Correa, Freiburg, Germany
- 1997 *El Tao del Arte*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1996 *Salón Hugo del Carril – Premio Fundación Banco de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Las Artes Plásticas en Formosa – Homenaje a Feliciano Centurión, Fundación Crisólogo Larraide, Formosa, Argentina
Frío / Caliente, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Objetos – 8 artistas de los países del mercosur, Salas de Exposiciones de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA), Buenos Aires, Argentina
Teko Paraguay, Maison de l’Amérique Latine, Paris, France
- 1994 *Feliciano Centurión Mónica González*, Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Premio Fundación Nuevo Mundo, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tres Artistas Paraguayos, Galería Lertina, Montevideo, Uruguay
Después del eclipse, Galería El Aleph, Asunción, Paraguay
III Bienal Martel, Manzana de la Rivera y Centro Cultural de la Ciudad, Asunción, Paraguay
90 60 90, Fundación Banco Patricios, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1993 *II Concurso La ciudad convoca a sus creadores*, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Del borde, Fundación Banco Patricios, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Archipiélago, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Casa de la Cultural Mario Quintana, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Los más jóvenes artistas de Ruth Benzacar, Galería Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Premio Fundación Nuevo Mundo, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Premio Honorable Consejo Deliberante, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
II Concurso, La ciudad convoca a sus creadores, Honorable Consejo Deliberante de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
¡Viva la muerte!, Parakultural New Border, Buenos Aires, Argentina

- 1992 *Premio Fundación Nuevo Mundo a la Nueva Pintura Argentina 1992 – Premio Especial, Antonio Seguí*, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Voces emergentes, Jornadas de la Crítica – Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Algunos artistas, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Premio Fundación Nuevo Mundo, Museo de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Segunda Bienal Martel de Pintura, Centro de Artes Visuales, Asunción, Paraguay
- 1991 *Preludio*, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Cinco artistas Paraguayos, Galería Centoira, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Fundación Amalia La Croze de Fortabat – Premio Joven Pintura Argentina 1991, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Bienvenida Primavera, Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
Premio Blades, Harrods en el Arte, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1990 *Premio Martel de Pintura*, Centro de Artes Visuales, Asunción, Paraguay
Superficies iluminadas, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Gráficos – Serigráficos, Pequeña Galería, Asunción, Paraguay

- 1989 *Obrabierta 89*, Centro de Artes Visuales, Asunción, Paraguay
Premio Fundación Manliba, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1988 *Obrabierta 88*, Centro de Artes Visuales, Asunción, Paraguay
Tres por Tres, Centro de Arte y Comunicación, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tres por Tres, Museo Paraguayo de Arte Contemporáneo, Asunción, Paraguay
Museu de Arte de Rio Grande do Sul (MARGS), Porto Alegre, Brazil
- 1986 *De la Cárcova 1986*, Centro Cultural de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires and Museo Municipal de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1985 *50 Salón de Otoño*, Centro Cultural las Malvinas, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Concurso Homenaje de Jóvenes Pintores – Año Internacional de la Juventud, Centro Cultural de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1982 *Muestra Jóvenes Artistas*, Estímulo de Bellas Artes, Asunción, Paraguay

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 5 años en el Rojas. Buenos Aires: Galería del Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1992.
- 90 60 90: *plastica*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Banco Patricios, 1994.
- Arte Joven. Asunción: Galería del Stand Cerveopar – Sociedad Cultural Manzana de la Rivera y Centro Cultural de la Ciudad, 1992.
- Batkis, Laura. *Feliciano Centurión*. Buenos Aires: Galería del Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1994.
- Block, Eric. “Interview | Cecilia Brunson Projects Founder on *I am Awake* by Feliciano Centurión.” *London Magazine*, November 12, 2019. <https://www.thelondonmagazine.org/interview-cecilia-brunson-projects-founder-on-i-am-awake-by-feliciano-centurion/>.
- Cerviño, Mariana. “Jorge Gumier Maier y Marcelo Pombo. Activistas gays en el campo artístico de Buenos Aires.” *Revista Latinoamericana*, no. 14 (August 2013): 91–113.
- Colombino, Carlos. *Frazadas Feliciano Centurión*. Asunción: Galería Fábrica, 1990.
- . *Pintura de Feliciano Centurión*. Asunción: Galería Arte Sanos, 1987.
- Davila-Villa, Ursula. “Feliciano Centurión.” In *Recovering Beauty: The 1990s in Buenos Aires*, edited by Ursula

- Davila-Villa, 50–56. Austin, TX: Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin, 2011.
- Davis, Fernando. “Feliciano Centurión. Las intensidades de la belleza.” Exhibition brochure. Asunción: Centro de Artes Visuales/Museo del Barro, 2013.
- Dillon, Marta. *Vivir con virus. Relatos de la vida cotidiana*. Buenos Aires: Página/12, 1997.
- “Diseño.” *Claudia* (Buenos Aires), no. 6, February 1993.
- Escobar, Ticio. “Extreme Ornamentation.” In *33rd Bienal de São Paulo: Affective Affinities*, edited by Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro and Fabiana Werneck, 1–8. São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 2018.
- . “Los Argumentos – Exposición de Artes Visuales.” In *Los Argumentos*, 3–12. Asunción: Centro Cultural de España Juan Salazar, 2002.
- Escobar, Ticio, and Jorge Gumier Maier. *Arte, sociedad, reflexión – Quinta Bienal de la Habana, mayo 1994*. Havana: La Bienal de La Habana, 1994.
- Feliciano Centurión*. Asunción: Galería Pequeña, 1994.
- Feliciano Centurión – Pinturas*. Buenos Aires: Galería del Rojas – Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas, Universidad de Buenos Aires, 1992.
- Feliciano Centurión: Últimas obras*. Asunción: Centro Cultural del España “Juan Salazar,” 1999.
- Fonseca Hernández, Carlos, and María Luisa Quintero Soto. “La Teoría *Queer*. La de-construcción de las sexualidades periféricas.” *Sociológica* (México) 24, no. 69 (2009): 43–60.
- Frío / Caliente. Buenos Aires: Centro Cultural Borges, 1994.

- Fundación Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat – Premio Joven Pintura Argentina 1991. Buenos Aires: Centro Cultural Recoleta, 1991.
- Iglesias, Claudio M. “Autobiografía, hiperestesia y ritualidad: Feliciano Centurión y algunos posicionamientos subyacentes a la objetualidad de los noventa en Argentina.” In *Vínculos rituales y retazo de magia. Una antología de Feliciano Centurión en diálogo con Liliana Maresca, Omar Schiliro y Fernanda Laguna*. Exhibition brochure. Buenos Aires: Galería Alberto Sendrós – arteBA, 2010.
- II Concurso, *La ciudad convoca a sus creadores*. Buenos Aires: Honorable Concejo Deliberante de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, 1993.
- Katzenstein, Inés. “Acá lejos: Arte en Buenos Aires durante los 90.” *Ramona*, no. 37 (2003): 4–15.
- Katzenstein, Inés, et al. *Marcelo Pombo, un artista del pueblo*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat, 2015.
- Lebenglik, Fabián. *Objetos, 8 Artistas de los Países de la Bienal del Mercosur*. Buenos Aires: Salas de Exposiciones de la Organización de Estados Americanos, 1996.
- Lemus, Francisco. “¿Arte light, arte rosa, arte marica! Reapropiaciones poéticas en el arte argentino de los noventa como formas de resistencia.” *Revista Cambia*, no. 1 (2015): 117–32.
- . “Exposiciones, entre el poder y el saber. La Galería del Rojas y el arte argentino de los años noventa en Austin.” *Estudios curatoriales – teoría, crítica, historia* 2, no. 2 (2014): 30–59.
- . “Infancia y temporalidades queer en la Galería del Rojas.” *A Journal of Queer Studies*, no. 12 (2017): 53–69.
- . “Retóricas de la pandemia. Derivas y resistencias en torno al arte argentino frente a la crisis del sida.” *Revista de Historia del Arte y Cultura Visual del Centro Argentino de Investigadores, de Arte (CAIA)*, no. 6 (2015): 1–8.
- Pérez-Barreiro, Gabriel, and Fabiana Werneck, eds., *33rd Bienal de São Paulo: Affective Affinities: Livro Registro*, 136–41. São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 2018.
- Premio Fundación Nuevo Mundo a la Nueva Pintura Argentina 1992. Buenos Aires: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1992.
- Premio Martel de la Pintura 1990. Asunción: Centro Cultural de Artes Visuales, 1990.
- Rosa, María Laura. “Cuando la intimidad es política. Arte y homosexualidad en el Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas de Buenos Aires durante los años ’90.” *Revista Latina de Sociología* (Buenos Aires) 5 (2015): 135–49.
- Salón Hugo del Carril, Premio Fundación Banco de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires: Museo de Arte Moderno, 1996.
- “Teko Paraguay.” Exhibition brochure. Paris: Maison de l’Amérique Latine, 1996.

CREDITS

All works by Feliciano Centurión are reproduced courtesy of the estate of the artist, familia Feliciano Centurión.

p. 3: Courtesy of Alejandro Leroux.

p. 16: Courtesy of Alberto Goldenstein.

p. 45: Courtesy of Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. Long-term loan of the Fundación Museo Reina Sofía, 2020 (Donation of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros in honor of Gustavo Bruzzone).

pp. 49, 61, 79, 83: Photos: Eva Herzog.

pp. 52–55: Photos: Arturo Sánchez.

pp. 72 and 75: Courtesy of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Purchased with funds contributed by the Latin American Circle, 2019.

pp. 67, 74: Courtesy of Cecilia Brunson Projects, London.

p. 95, 102–105: Courtesy of Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin. Museum purchase with funds provided by Donald R. Mullins, Jr., 2004.

p. 107: Courtesy of Mon Ross.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sarah Anderson; Socorro de Andrade Lima; Bill Arning; Adriana Barcenás; Pablo León de la Barra; Germán Barraza; Tracey Bashkoff; Manuel Borja-Villel; Fabián Bozzolo; Cecilia Brunson; Gustavo Bruzzone; Mimi Carbia; Lucía Cattaneo; María Gloria Centurión; María Yolanda Centurión; Esther Chao; Lia Colombino; Bete Costa; Vanessa Davidson; Ursula Davila-Villa; Ángeles Devoto; Ticio Escobar; Jimena Ferreiro; Alberto Goldenstein; Claudio Enrique Gómez; José Antonio Gómez, Carolina González Castro; Nicolás Guagnini; Geannine Guimaraes; Jorge Gumier Maier; Fred Henderson; Inés Katzenstein; Ileen Kohn; Fabian Lebenglik; Francisco Lemus; Ana López; Roberto Macchiavelli; Esther McGowan; Magdalena Messing; André Millan, Skye Monson; Carol Neemann; Ricardo Ocampo; Rosario Peiro Carrasco; Marcelo Pombo, Gabriela Rangel; Mon Ross; Cristina Schiavi; Alberto Sendrós; Blanca Serrano Ortiz; Cassandra Smith; Galia Solomonoff; Meredith Sutton; Verónica Torres; Natacha del Valle; Simone Wicha; Facundo de Zuviría.



waldengallery

GALERIA MILLAN

CECILIA
BRUNSON
PROJECTS

NYC
Cultural
Affairs

Arts
of the
Americas
Circle

Feliciano Centurión: Abrigo

February 14–May 16, 2020

Americas Society
680 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065
www.as-coa.org/visual-arts

Founder: David Rockefeller †
Chairman: Andrés Gluski
President and CEO: Susan L. Segal
Treasurer: George B. Weiksner
Vice President, Public Policy Programs and Corporate Relations: Ragnhild Melzi

Exhibition

Guest Curator: Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro
Director and Chief Curator of Visual Arts: Aimé Iglesias Lukin
Assistant Curator: Diana Flatto
Assistant Curator for Public Programs: Carolina Scarborough
Exhibition Designer: Galia Solomonoff and Solomonoff Architecture Studio
Head Preparator and Fabricator: Cein Watson
Installation: David Barr, Justin Joseph

Publication

Visual Arts exhibition series editors: Karen Marta and Aimé Iglesias Lukin
Associate editor: Diana Flatto
Project manager: Todd Bradway
Copy editor: Miles Champion
Designer: Garrick Gott

Printed and bound by GHP, West Haven, CT

Printed on Accent Opaque Smooth
Typeset in Basis Grotesque and Dorian

Publication © 2020, Americas Society
All texts © 2020, the authors
All artworks © 2020, the artists

ISBN 978-1-879128-45-3
Library of Congress Control Number: 2020930473

Printed in the United States

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher. The publisher gratefully acknowledges permission granted to reproduce the copyrighted materials in this book. Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyrighted material. The publisher apologizes for any errors or omissions and would be grateful if notified of any corrections that should be incorporated in future reprints or editions of this publication.

Americas / SOCIETY