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South China Morning Post

'Arts preview: Los Carpinteros turn confusion into an art form' by Edmund Lee

Link: <http://www.scmp.com/magazines/48hrs/article/1329480/arts-preview-los-carpinteros-turnconfusion-art-form>

Arts preview: Los Carpinteros turn confusion into an art form

Edmund Lee



MARCO ANTONIO CASTILLO VALDÉS (LEFT) AND DAGOBERTO RODRIGUEZ SÁNCHEZ, WITH THEIR WORK OCTOGONAL (2013).
PHOTO: MAY TSE

LOS CARPINTEROS: HETEROTOPIAS **Edouard Malingue Gallery**

You're not alone: the duo behind Cuban-born, primarily Madrid-based collective Los Carpinteros are just as confused about the delirious blend of art, design and architecture in their sometimes functional and often playful body of work as everyone else.

"The functionality of the things we make is fascinating, because we're totally confused about it," says Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez, who formed Los Carpinteros in 1991 with Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés, and Alexandre Jesus

Arrechea Zambrano, who left the group in 2003. "Sometimes we don't know the nature of the things that we produce. We have the intuition to make the logical [decisions], but we don't know the consequences."

The duo are presenting two recent lines of work at their first solo exhibition in Asia: large-scale watercolour drawings that depict chaotic, imaginary structures built with Lego blocks, and prototype sculptures of "reading room" architecture, which the artists derived from philosopher Michel Foucault's idea of the panopticon prison, before subverting its surveillance principle, and adapting it for library building purposes.

Both series explore the idea of space, and have a long history in Los Carpinteros' oeuvre. Sánchez jokes that the selection of the drawings stems from the fact that "we're in the mood of Lego". It is a theme that aptly corresponds to the duo's fascination with construction materials, such as bricks and cinder blocks.

"These scenarios have been made to make you feel small. We want to give the feeling of isolation that happens in the human life today," says Sánchez.

Valdés says: "[The drawings] give you a sensation of multiplicity. They are, in a certain way, a question about the development of a construction: the idea of China becoming a crazy, almost maniacally constructive country. We reflect on this inhuman aspect with these drawings. It's almost like an illness of construction."

Sánchez and Valdés maintain that they're happy to trade the concept of individual authorship for collaborative practice. "People think visual art is something you make in a closed room, with almost no light, but that is not the reality," says Sánchez.

"Visual art needs people; it needs to be communicated and spread. It's one of the most social practices in the world. Nobody works 100 per cent alone."

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edmund.lee@scmp.com

Edouard Malingue Gallery, 1/F, 8 Queen's Road Central, Monday-Saturday, 10am-7pm. Ends November 23.

Inquiries: 2810 0317

ARTS

Edited by Sam Hobart
http://www.hkmagazine.com

Exhibitions



An Oasis of Survival and Hope
Seeing as this city was host for its own share of atrocities during the Second World War, Hong Kong doesn't offer too many opportunities for mourning the six million Jews killed in Europe during the Holocaust. So if you'd like your children to be a bit more history-conscious or you're curious yourself, Central Market's Oasis footbridge is featuring artwork done by Jewish children who were held at the Terezin Concentration Camp, alongside more recent art from similar-aged children from schools in Hong Kong, who produced the work as a response to their lessons on the Holocaust. Lest we forget. Through Nov 15. Central Market Oasis, 3/F, Central Market, 20 Gilman's Bazaar, Central.



Cyrcle: Capture The Flag
"There is no 'I' in the America we know," say the Los Angeles street art duo Cyrcle: "we spell it 'Amerycya,' suggesting cooperation over competition." It's a cute tagline, but darkness looms underneath Cyrcle's work, which combines classic romanticism with "alchemic symbolism" as a means to deal with serious matters in a playful way. This latest show at Above Second looks at America through the mythology of the Cowboy and the Indian, and taps into themes such as progress, liberation and inspiration—all while using only recycled materials. It's art that's good for the environment, the soul, and for an afternoon on the town. Through Nov 16, Above Second, 31 Eastern St., Sai Ying Pun, 3483-7950.



Los Carpinteros: Heterotopias
Since 1991, Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés and Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez (I am suffering from intense name-jealousy as we speak) have been using their multi-media artworks to expose the social issues of their native Cuba to the wider world. Together they are Los Carpinteros, and this solo exhibition—their first in Asia—includes a series of large-scale drawings as well as five massive wooden sculptures, or "reading rooms," that reimagine traditional Latin American architectural designs for educational purposes. It's all muy bueno, but in a city like Hong Kong, couldn't they commission those wood igloos to be used as breezy, low-rent flats? Through Nov 23. Edouard Malingue Gallery, 1/F, 8 Queen's Rd. Central, Central, 2810-0317.



Framed: Ai Weiwei and Hong Kong Artists
I don't want to sound too Mugatu here, but Ai Weiwei is so hot right now. It seems that you can't throw a porcelain sunflower seed these days without hitting some picture of the famed Chinese artist posing naked (read a book, guys), and given our proximity to the Communist pressure cooker, it's fitting that Hong Kong is host to the latest exhibition that Ai Weiwei has curated himself. "Framed" features work from 13 prominent local artists, including Kingsley Ng, Kitty Chou, and MAP Office—check it out for yourself and join the global discussion about one of our region's loudest artistic voices. Through Feb 15. Duddell's, 3-4/F, Shanghai Tang Mansion, Duddell St., Central, 2525-9191.

Nov 2013
AM Post
'HETEROTOPIAS' by Elizabeth Brown

exhibition

age: 040-051

Avenida
2011
Watercolour on paper
200 x 230 cm (triptych)



Words by Elizabeth Brown // Images courtesy the artists and Edward Malingue Gallery



Resonancia Constructiva
2013
Watercolour on paper
200 x 230 cm (triptych)

Heterotopias by Los Carpinteros
October - 23 November
Edward Malingue Gallery
P.O. Queen's Road Central

exhibition
001

HETEROTOPIAS

The Cuban-based collective incorporates architecture, design and sculpture to create installation and paintings that derive inspiration from the physical world, and navigate between the lines of reality and between the functional and non-functional.

Deriving inspiration from Michel Foucault's article "Of Other Spaces", Los Carpinteros' new exhibition – their first major exhibition in Hong Kong and Asia at large – explores notions of otherness through juxtapositions of large-scale watercolours of derelict landscapes and small prototypes of architectural forms. Through this investigation, the Cuban duo surveys a series of realistic, yet unrecognisable heterotopias. Operating outside hegemonic parameters, a heterotopia is an alternate space of otherness in

which the lines of reality are blurred. By layering different representations of reality to produce a nuanced, problematic form, a heterotopia draws on truth, but there is more than meets the eye.

Los Carpinteros, an artistic collective comprised of Marco Castillo and Dagoberto Rodríguez, are responsible for many of the most significant works to emerge from Latin America in the last two decades. Renouncing ideas of individual authorship from its inception, the group harks back to the traditions of guilds and craftsmen, producing a multimedia body of work that draws from the physical world and negotiates elements of (non)functional art and architecture. Their works are held in the permanent collections of a multitude of prestigious institutions including the Guggenheim, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, among others. Additionally, Los Carpinteros have exhibited widely in solo exhibitions throughout Europe and the Americas.

Their current show, *Heterotopias*, consists of a series of watercolour drawings and small architectural skeletons. *Avenida* (2011) – a monumental triptych in muted blue – depicts an urban landscape in Legos. Although the individual pieces stand a relic of youth, the resulting edifices convey an eerie sense of desertion and anxiety, as the buildings seem desolate and decaying. In this space, the audience is pulled into a landscape with a decidedly Communist tinge. By mapping the uneven facades of the fictitious street view, the *equipo* explores a three dimensional, recognisable world, but transforms it into something foreign: a heterotopia.

A series of architectural prototypes also speak to this interest in constructing an alternative space. Consisting of five small wooden skeletal rooms, the prototypes initially appear to be simple wooden sculptures; in actuality, each represents a small-scale architectural model for multifunctional rooms. Intricate and delicate, a prototype entitled *Giro* (2013) is a miniature version of the duo's Art Basel Miami Beach 2012 installation, a collaborative piece with Absolut Art Bureau in the shape of a giro (a Latin American ribbed percussion instrument) that served as both installation and functioning bar. While the full-scale version garnered critical acclaim in Miami and incorporated audience intervention, its smaller counterpart focuses on the idea of creating a novel, uncommon space.

In echoing Foucault's concepts of human geography, the exhibition reflects the ways in which a heterotopia can be a solitary space that combines many experiences and serve as a microcosm for the real, recognisable world. In this sense, the juxtapositions presented in *Heterotopias* negotiate Los Carpinteros' relationship with art, architecture, and society. The result is a stunning and subtle commentary on form and function.



Giro
2013
Ultra light medium-density fibreboard
40 x 100 x 60 cm (sculpture)


11 Oct 2013

The Standard

'Captive audience' by Mercy Lo

Link: http://www.thestandard.com.hk/news_detail.asp?we_cat=12&art_id=138384&sid=40598376&con_ty pe=3&d_str=20131011&fc=7

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ARCHIVE





Captive audience

Mercy Lo
Friday, October 11, 2013

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The central tower is designed in a way that wardens can pass through doors in the tower without making any noise or letting out a glimmer of light. The prisoners live with the uncertainty of not knowing whether they are being watched at any moment.

Presidio Modelo was a panopticon prison in Cuba. Built in the late 1920s during the rule of Cuba's dictatorial president Gerardo Machado, it was in use until permanently closed down in 1967.

Inspired by the panopticon design, Havana-based art collective Los Carpinteros has created a series of miniature architectures called The Reading Rooms. Made out of fiberboard, each of these architectural structures contains shelf-like tiers that resemble the language of the panopticon prisons.


Dagoberto Rodriguez Sanchez and Marco Antonio Castillo Valdes - both in their early 40s - make up the Cuban art duo, established in 1991. The group is known for producing artworks across multiple mediums that poses a witty perspective on different social issues of Cuba as well as the rest of the world.

The Reading Room series is one of their signature productions.

"Today there is this big debate about the virtual panopticon with the internet," Sanchez says. "Every move you make online becomes transparent to the government. Everything from your banking decisions to leisure entertainment is all under the watch of your government. Your life is very exposed indeed.

"We are not only referring to the communist governments in Cuba and China. Even the United States, which prides itself as free, is seeing a great deal of control of her people. Control is a way for governments to survive. There is no real freedom in the world."

A few months back, former CIA and National Security Agency employee



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MEMBER LOGIN




The Match at Mission Hills
TIGER WOODS VS RORY MCILROY
Blackstone Course at Mission Hills Haikou, Hainan
28 OCT 2013



Edward Snowden leaked classified information on the mass surveillance programs of the United States and British governments to the press. Snowden's disclosure of such sensitive material was a wake-up call to internet users about cyber security. This exemplifies Sanchez's perspective on freedom.

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"It's actually killing the freedom of its people," Valdes says. "The government is seemingly giving more freedom to its people, allowing them to do more things, giving an image to the rest of the world that they are not so bad. Hypocritical indeed. They are not genuinely setting its people free, but they are just keeping a low profile on surveillance tactics."

The artists are not only intrigued by the political reference of the panopticon model, they are also fascinated by the artistic aspect of the symmetrical design.

One of its prototypes, Guiro, was brought to life-size form at Art Basel Miami Beach 2013 as an art bar installation. Tweaking the concept slightly, the duo created a skeletal architectural structure resembling that of a Puerto Rican percussion instrument.

The Reading Rooms can also be interpreted as a library with book-filled shelves. Standing in the center inside the structure is like standing at the middle of all knowledge, being enveloped in wisdom.

Los Carpinteros is also widely recognized for their watercolor paintings of structures or architecture made with Lego.

Interseccion is a large-scale diptych painting of a street with pavements and buildings constructed with Lego, while Escalera de Lego IV is an illustration of a cityscape built with monotonous Lego pieces.

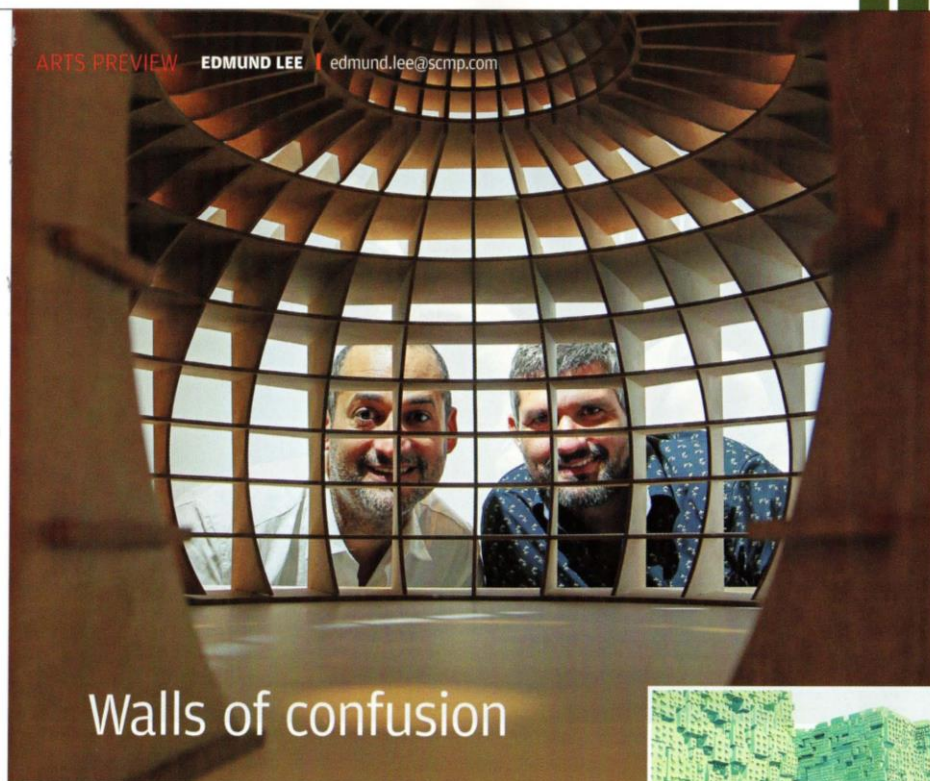
"Lego is a human abstraction of a constructional element, like a brick that constructs huge architecture. It is something you can build in your own home, a miniature version of different structures," Sanchez says. The artists are interested in building a structure from a simple single unit - for instance, a Lego piece or a brick. Each Lego brick is little by nature, but almost all structures are a result of many blocks.

"In Fenomeno Constructivo, we use small blocks of bricks in an almost obsessive-compulsive manner, building a floating island with these blocks and allowing it to grow out in an uncontrollable way," Valdes says. "It can be understood as an illustration of the overpopulation problem around the world."

Edouard Malingue Gallery has invited the duo to do their first solo show in Asia at its space at 8 Queen's Road Central until November 23. Admission is free.

Nov 2013

Arts Preview: 'Walls of Confusion' by Edmund Lee



ARTS PREVIEW EDMUND LEE | edmund.lee@scmp.com

Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés (left) and Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez, with their work *Octogonal* (2013). Photo: May Tse.
Below: watercolour *Intersección* (2013).

Walls of confusion

**LOS CARPINTEROS:
HETEROTOPIAS**
Edouard Malingue Gallery

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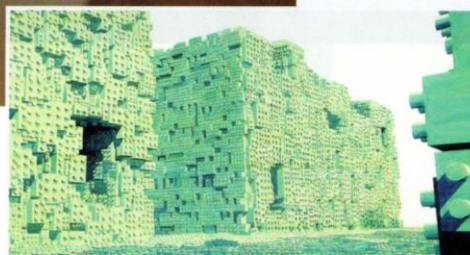
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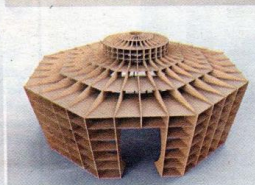
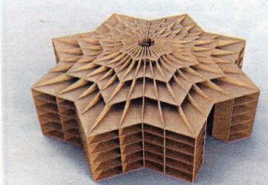
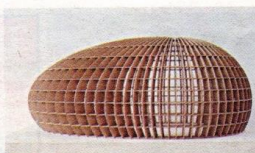
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22 SPREE The Standard
Friday, October 11, 2013 英文虎報

ART & CULTURE



Among the artworks at Los Carpinteros' first solo show in Hong Kong are, clockwise from left: *Guero*, *Avenida*, *Octagonal* and *Estrella*.

CAPTIVE AUDIENCE

Mercy Lo visits an exhibition on lost freedoms inspired by a Cuban jail

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mercy.lo@singtaonewscorp.com

Havana-based collective Los Carpinteros consists of two artists – Dagoberto Rodriguez Sanchez, left, and Marco Antonio Castillo Valdes.



Feng shui for life

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON

Go with the flow

An old man was walking with friends along a swift-flowing river when he stumbled and fell in. He was swept downstream through a cluster of fierce rapids, and dashed on the rocks, before plunging over the edge of a steep waterfall.

Friends, fearing for his life, ran to the plunge pool. To their amazement the old man came to the edge of the pool, unharmed. "Old man," they cried, "how could you have survived both the rapids and the fall?"

"I don't know," he answered.

"I only know that I did not try to fight the water, but allowed myself to be shaped by it. I accommodated myself to the stream, and the stream carried me without harm."

Is that so?

A beautiful girl in a village became pregnant. Her angry parents demanded to know who the father was. At first hesitant to say, the girl finally pointed to Hakuin, a Zen master who everyone had previously respected for living a pure life.

When the outraged parents confronted Hakuin with their daughter's accusation, he simply replied: "Is that so?"

When the child was born, the parents brought it to Hakuin, who was now a pariah in the village. They demanded that he take care of the child since it was his responsibility.

"Is that so?" Hakuin said calmly as he accepted the child. For many months he took very good care of the child until the girl could no longer withstand the lie she had told.

She confessed that the real father was a young man in the village whom she had tried to protect. The parents immediately went to Hakuin to see if he would return the baby.

With profuse apologies they explained what had happened. "Is that so?" was all Hakuin said as he handed them the child.

Thought for the week: I dreamed I was a butterfly; then I awoke. Now I wonder: am I a man dreaming of being a butterfly, or am I a butterfly dreaming that I am a man?

— Zhuangzi

* Kerby Kuek has published 10 books on feng shui. He specializes in yin and yang feng shui, I-Ching, life analysis and astrology. Website: www.misterfengshui.com



17 Oct 2013

Cuban Art News

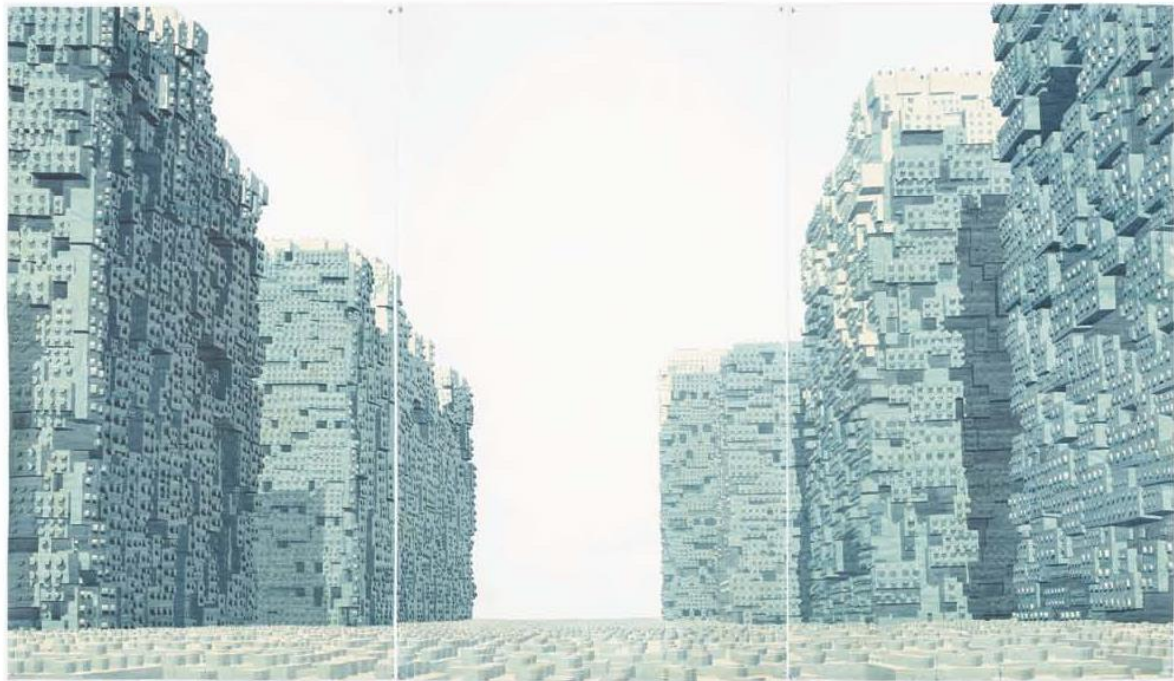
'Argentina, Diaz in Switzerland, Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong, Miranda in Taipei'

Link: <http://www.cubanartnews.org/news/update-garaicoa-in-argentina-diaz-in-switzerland-los-carpinteros-in-hong-ko/3203>



Update: Garaicoa in Argentina, Díaz in Switzerland, Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong, Miranda in Taipei

Published: October 17, 2013



Los Carpinteros, *Avenida*, 2013 (triptych)

Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery

Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong. They may construct sculptures out of Lego blocks, but when it comes to the theoretical underpinnings of their work Los Carpinteros don't kid around. *Heteropias*, the title of their first solo show in Asia, was inspired by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who defined *heteropia* as a space of otherness—not one place or another but simultaneously physical and mental, like the experience of a phone call. At Edouard Malingue gallery, the Legos are confined to two dimensions, in large-scale watercolors detailing crumbling cityscapes assembled from the plastic blocks. Also on view: meticulously crafted models of openwork structures that reference Foucault's concept of the panopticon—including a model of *Güiro*, the full-sized party bar made for last year's Art Basel Miami Beach. On view through November 23.

23 Nov 2013

ART Infinite

'Heterotopias'

Link: <http://thehousenews.com/art/event/%E8%A6%96%E8%97%9D%E8%A1%93/heterotopias>

主 | 藝 場 | 術

ART[∞]

Heterotopias

10月04日至11月23日



Edouard Malingue Gallery is thrilled to announce the first solo show in Hong Kong, and more widely in Asia, of the infamous Cuban-born collective, Los Carpinteros (est. 1991). Based between Cuba and Madrid, Los Carpinteros are at the forefront of Latin American and International art and are widely recognised for their artwork, across multiple mediums, that wittily distorts commonplace objects to address the social issues of their native Cuba and today's wider world. Presenting a range of their works that negotiate the space between the functional and the nonfunctional, the gallery will display a series of large-scale drawings that depict edifices and mappings as well as five sculptures, or 'reading rooms',

which are prototypes for their impressive architectural constructs that have been exhibited around the world. The highly anticipated project exemplifies how Los Carpinteros create conscientious responses to places, spaces and objects, to address how they have been conceived, built, used and abandoned.

Established in 1991, Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés (b. 1971) and Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez (b. 1969) came together in Havana as artists who noticed a national artistic brain drain resulting from the 1980s Pax Americana and a crumbling Soviet Union. Wishing to resurge Cuban artistic practice, they came together to discuss, observe and make works. From this initiative their 'equipo', or team, was born as they remarked that what they created was a collaboration, which stemmed from their shared ideas and aims. As a collective, they observed and mentally digested the forms and functions of what they saw around them and presented ordinary objects in novel forms that were intelligent and brimming with humour and wit, the idea being to displace the given and alter that which is immediately recognisable.

18 Dec 2013

Foucault News

'Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong (2013)' by Clare O'Farrell

Link: <http://foucaultnews.com/2013/12/18/los-carpinteros/>

Foucault News

Activity relating to the work of French thinker Michel Foucault (1926–1984)

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Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong (2013)

18 December 2013 by [Clare O'Farrell](#)

Again, I am late with this notice, but am posting this information so people can keep an eye out for future exhibitions.



http://foucaultnews.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/avenida_triptych-2013.jpg

Los Carpinteros, Avenida, 2013 (triptych) Courtesy Edouard Malingue Gallery

Los Carpinteros in Hong Kong. They may construct sculptures out of Lego blocks, but when it comes to the theoretical underpinnings of their work Los Carpinteros don't kid around. Heteropias, the title of their first solo show in Asia, was inspired by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who defined heteropia as a space of otherness—not one place or another but simultaneously physical and mental, like the experience of a phone call. At Edouard Malingue gallery, the Legos are confined to two dimensions, in large-scale watercolors detailing crumbling cityscapes assembled from the plastic blocks. Also on view: meticulously

crafted models of openwork structures that reference Foucault's concept of the panopticon—including a model of Güiro, the full-sized party bar made for last year's Art Basel Miami Beach. On view through November 23.

Source: [Cuban Art News \(http://www.cubanartnews.org/news/update-garaicoa-in-argentina-diaz-in-switzerland-los-carpinteros-in-hong-ko/3203\)](http://www.cubanartnews.org/news/update-garaicoa-in-argentina-diaz-in-switzerland-los-carpinteros-in-hong-ko/3203)

Oct 2013
Art Map

Los Carpinteros

Edouard Malingue Gallery (1/F, 8 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong)
4th October – 23rd November 2013

The first solo show in Hong Kong, and more widely in Asia, of the infamous Cuban-born collective, Los Carpinteros (est. 1991). Based between Cuba and Madrid, Los Carpinteros are at the forefront of Latin American and International art and are widely recognised for their artwork, across multiple mediums, that wittily distorts commonplace objects to address the social issues of their native Cuba and today's wider world. Presenting a range of their works that negotiate the space between the functional and the nonfunctional, the gallery will display a series of large-scale drawings that depict edifices and mappings as well as five sculptures, or 'reading rooms',



which are prototypes for their impressive architectural constructs that have been exhibited around the world. The highly anticipated project exemplifies how Los Carpinteros create conscientious responses to places, spaces and objects, to address how they have been conceived, built, used and abandoned.

HOT DATES

1 TUE

- The Hong Kong Bach Choir concert at City Hall; until October 4

2 WED

- Koon Wai-bong's *Mindscape* exhibition opens at AO Vertical Art Space; until November 16

3 THU

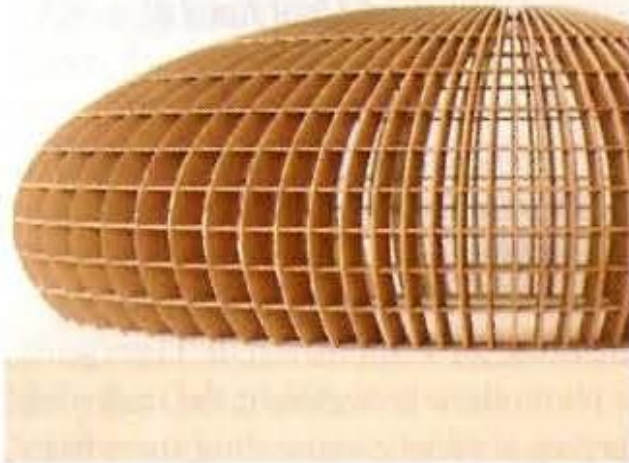
- Asia Art Contemporary at the JW Marriott; until October 6
- Fine Art Asia at the Convention & Exhibition Centre; until October 7
- Hans-Peter Feldmann solo exhibition opens at Simon Lee Gallery; until November 19

4 FRI

- Design Mart at K11 Mall; until October 6
- Los Carpinteros's *Heterotopias* exhibition opens at Edouard Malingue Gallery; until November 23
- MR solo exhibition opens at Galerie Perrotin; until November 8

5 SAT

- Sotheby's Southeast Asian art sales at the Convention and Exhibition Centre; also on October 6
- The FCC charity ball at the Convention and Exhibition Centre
- Jazz night at Duddell's



Heterotopias **Until Nov 23**

Edouard Malingue, 1/F, 8 Queen's Rd C, Central, 2810 0317; edouardmalingue.com. Mon-Sat 10am-7pm. Los Carpinteros, a Cuban-born duo, exhibit their large-scale drawings and sculptures in their first solo show in Hong Kong. The architecture and design focused pair were commissioned to create a Güiro installation (pictured above) for Absolut's vodka bar at Art Basel Miami Beach in 2012 – the installation mimics a traditional Cuban percussion instrument and the title is also a slang word in Cuban for 'party'.

Nov 2013

FlashOn

'Culture Club: Los Carpinteros Cuba Rocks!' by Laddy Wong

CULTURECLUB text Laddy Wong photo Dennis Yong Studio (部分圖片由馬凌畫廊及 Los Carpinteros 提供)



Avenida (triptych), 2011

Los Carpinteros: 由 Diego Roberto (左) 及 Marco (右) 組成，首次來港的二人，極力推廣大眾對古巴熟悉，親身體驗當地文化藝術的活力。

《Los Carpinteros: Heterotopias》
First Solo Show in Asia of Infamous Cuban Duo
Date Now until Nov 28
Time 10:00am-7:00pm (Mon-Sat)
Venue Ecouard Malingue Gallery (First Floor, 8 Queen's Road, Central)
Enquiry 2810 0317

古巴樂與怒 Los Carpinteros CUBA ROCKS!

既定印象，讓人損失良多。舉例說古巴吧，如果我們腦海中仍周旋於「哲古華拉」、「女排」、「雪茄」之時，古巴藝術二人組 Los Carpinteros 笑盈盈介紹故鄉的快樂與朝氣：「基於歷史和文化因素，很多人對古巴的印象充滿浪漫元素，認為很革命、很憤怒，其實當下古巴正處於經濟和文化急速變遷的時代，整個社會充滿活力。」自 1991 年組成後迅速蜚聲國際的藝術組合坐言起行，作品入世現實，嘲諷關心之餘不失幽默感，以 Lego「砌」成的水彩畫，高樓大廈巨大空間，充滿開心色調和童真，卻又帶有共產主義（一式一樣的間隔）和城市機械式高速發展的現實況味；帶來香港的鵝蛋形木製建築模型 Sala de lectura Ovalada，可以是舒適知性兼有型的圖書館及酒吧，原型卻是古巴的監獄。快樂與憤怒任何時候均存在於現實空間，藝術與生活如是。何必討厭政治？

Preconceptions can often do more harm than good. For example, when we think of Cuba, what comes to mind is probably still Che Guevara, volleyball and cigars, but Cuban art duo Los Carpinteros are giving us a warm introduction to the happiness and joie de vivre in their homeland. "For historical and cultural reasons, a lot of people have a very romanticized view of Cuba. But right now, Cuba is undergoing huge economic and cultural changes and the entire society is really vivacious." After meeting in 1991, the artistic duo has shot to fame internationally, becoming the representatives of the Cuban contemporary art scene. Their works are concerned with reality, but its cynicism is never without humour. Their watercolours depicting skyscrapers and giant structures made from Lego, have a naivety in their use of vivid, happy colours, but there is always the reminder of Communism (the uniformity of the rooms in the buildings) and the harsh consequences that come from rapid urbanization. The egg shaped maquette Sala de Lectura Ovalada which they have brought to Hong Kong, depicts a space which could easily be a comfortable, intellectual space for a library or a bar, but is instead inspired by the format of a Cuban prison. In reality, laughter and anger go side by side, and so does art and life.

藝術愛現實

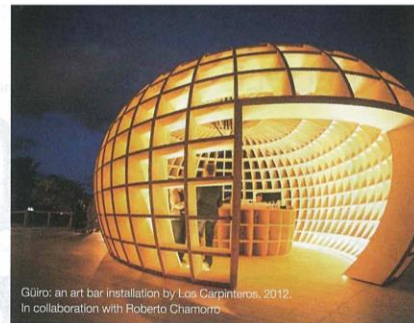
在1999年國際大導Wim Wenders名作《樂滿夏灣拿》(Buena Vista Social Club)，展示古巴人豪爽、入世，如何愛生活愛藝術；電影拍攝之前8年，熱愛藝術的十幾歲仔Marco和Dagoberto組成Los Carpinteros組合，為的就是要在政治環境面臨巨變（前蘇聯政權搖搖欲墜、美國文化生活模式不知不覺影響着古巴，導致藝術人才流失）的大時代，組成藝術組合，透過討論、創作，振興古巴藝術，尤其以幽默、率直、充滿想像力的方式，把社會貼身情況轉化成藝術作品的嶄新形態，之前提及的「監倉圖書館」Sala de lectura Ovalada及Cúiro等作品固然是絕佳例子，四面包抄的鵝蛋建築物，既可想像為「把監視場地化為知識貯藏庫」，同時亦反映網絡文化之下，資訊垂手可得，包括個人私穩，四面八方起人底者人亦能被起底之。巧妙、現實不失幽默。「藝術家都要居住、吃飯搭車的，我們就是活在現實中嘛？當下環境、生活痕跡，自然而然也會存在於藝術家的心裏吧。」監視、城管、政治特權……統統曾存在於古巴人的生活與歷史，藝術組合大化之，幽默不失反思。作品取材現實，選材也非常易讀易理解，「就像Lego系列如Avenida等，v以Lego作為『選材』，是Lego同時具有建築與玩具的國際共同語言，那像一式一樣的積木『砌』出來的城市、畫像或雕塑，當中已具有好玩而又規律的元素，水彩畫色更讓人感到快樂。我們就是想表達這種帶玩味性的思考。」其他作品，當中不少反映現實爽快直接，把蕃茄「整齊而美麗地」掙滿整

幅牆的「Tomato」，靈感理直氣壯：「哦，那時感受到不少西班牙人對社會現狀『隨時想掙蕃茄』，索性把怨懣形象化囉！」寧願又好笑又好笑，也不要逃避現實，這也許是藝術家最大的信念吧。

見聞夏灣拿

不止作品現實而幽默，藝術組合本身也愛旅遊，到過北京、上海，接觸過一些中國藝術家，對中國現代藝術最深印象，是感受到其中的潛質：「我感覺是中國新一代藝術家充滿好奇和活力，內心蘊藏很大能量，透過作品有很多話要說，正在找尋說話的方式。」同為入世、現實而幽默，中國芸芸現代藝術家中，談到艾未未，兩人表示他不僅是傑出的建築師和藝術家，還很關心社會現狀。「他的作品也充滿幽默感。」

篤信增廣見聞，不失處處對古巴懷有深情，初到香港的兩位藝術家，馬上化身古巴旅遊大使，極力鼓勵在場的記者攜記往古巴走一轉。「見聞是很重要的，你可以在紙上或網上資訊固然得到印象，但古巴的文化、發展，當地新一代藝術家的活力，你是要到過才會知道它的魅力。國家有很多舊樓，同時新建築物和城市規劃也在籌備當中，我的一組木製作品Coppelia，其實是古巴隨處可見的雪櫃屋模樣：古巴在拉丁美洲的重要位置，近年發展也非常迅速，近年多了不少中國移民投資地產，正是處於轉變發展期當中，希望大家去親自感受一下。」活在當下，敞開眼界去感受生活與現實，任何時候都比逃避和裝睡活得更有意義。

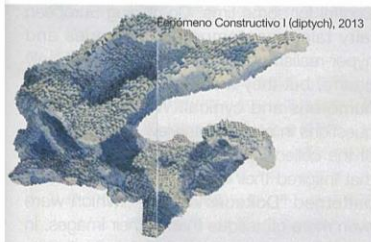


Güiro: an art bar installation by Los Carpinteros, 2012. In collaboration with Roberto Chiamorro

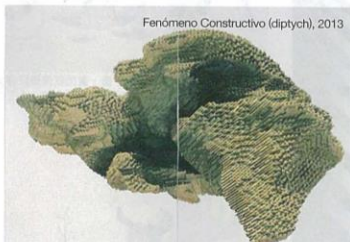
在 Art Basel Miami 展出的作品靈感來自古巴的監獄，獄卒站在牆面形建築物的中央，以便監察囚犯一舉一動。藝術家把它化身為圖書館，寓意被知識包圍，亦可暗喻我們被網絡世界包抄得密不透風；邁亞密的版本更加入了酒吧，酒保就在建築物中央。



在紐約展出的作品「Tomatoes」，2013。表達西班牙人對社會現狀「隨時想掙蕃茄」，痛快好玩！Photography: Jason Whyche, Courtesy: Sean Kelly Gallery, NY.



Enjambre Constructivo I (diptych), 2013



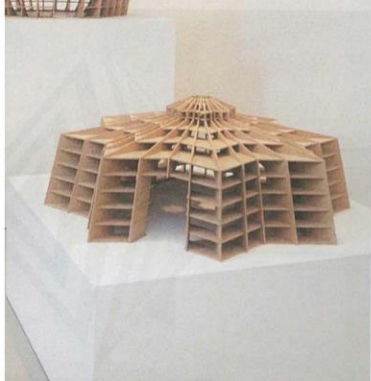
Fenómeno Constructivo (diptych), 2013



Front: Estrella (Prototype), 2013
Back: Octagonal (Prototype), 2013



Intersección, 2013

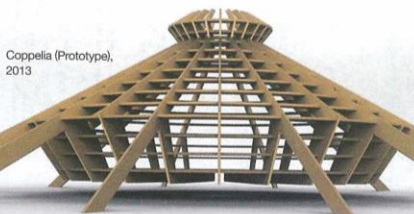


2006年在紐約展出的另一隻馬之作「Home Pool」，把泳池與洗手盆大結合：對於住在娘屋的香港人，幽默之餘別有一番無奈。Courtesy: Sean Kelly Gallery, NY.

About Los Carpinteros

斐登國際的古巴藝術組合，於1991年由Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés (1971年出生)及Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez (1969年出生)兩位夏灣拿藝術家組成。當年，搖搖欲墜的蘇聯政權，加上美國的相對和平，導致夏灣拿藝術人才外流。為了復興古巴藝術，二人於1991年成立了Los Carpinteros，透過討論、觀察、創作，並用創新的方式把日常生活中見到的尋常事物轉化成一些全新形態，作品充滿幽默感和智慧，其概念是把原有或既有的改頭換面，讓人們對這些本來貌似普通的物件重新思考。組合曾於馬德里的Thyssen-Bornemisza、圖恩的Kunstmuseum以及布宜諾斯艾利斯的Faena Art Center等國際著名藝術中心舉辦多個獨立展覽。作品已成為多個藝術中心或博物館的收藏品。

Established in 1991, Marco Antonio Castillo Valdés (b. 1971) and Dagoberto Rodríguez Sánchez (b. 1969) came together in Havana as artists who noticed a national artistic brain drain resulting from the 1980s Pax Americana and a crumbling Soviet Union. Wanting to resurge Cuban artistic practice, they came together to discuss, observe and make works. From this initiative their 'equipom, or team, was born as they remarked that what they created was a collaboration, which stemmed from their shared ideas and aims. As a collective, they observed and mentally digested the forms and functions of what they saw around them and presented ordinary objects in novel forms that were intelligent and brimming with humour and wit, the idea being to displace the given and alter that which is immediately recognisable. Los Carpinteros have held multiple solo exhibitions around the world including at the Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, the Kunstmuseum in Thun and the Faena Art Center in Buenos Aires.



Coppelia (Prototype), 2013

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"FlashOn" (p.154), November 2013