

Trip to India

April 20 - May 25, 2006

Connections Cafe



New Year in India: The Market by Leandro Soto and Rene German Maldonado

Mexican artist Rene German Maldonado and Cuban-born artist Leandro Soto created this series of work exploring India and its cultures.

The artists, using local Indian newspapers as a support surface, assemble digital photographs, drawings and sketches and found images in a large format collage. The artists' intent is to share the richness and the intense reality of contemporary Indian cultures. During their explorations from December 2005 through January 2006, the artists found many similarities with Caribbean cultures where they share a part of their life as artists/art educators.

The artists selected the format and dimensions of the work to recreate a panoramic view of a multidimensional rich reality, where the focus of attention is always moving thanks to the contrast and mixing of contemporary life style with old and traditional practices.



Ceremonial Landscape by Leandro Soto and Rene German Maldonado

The art works are visual representations of the artists' fascination with intense colors, textures, images, the meanings of objects, sacred landscapes and religious rituals/dances. The drawings, as well as the pictures, were done in the places they visited. The final renderings were performed in Phoenix immediately after the return. This is the first time these works appear in exhibition.

Rene German Maldonado is a Mexican artist and art educator based in Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico. Rene graduated in 1988 from the experimental art school "El Tesoro de Tamulte" in Tamulte de las Sabanas, Tabasco, and studied with artists Raoul Deal, Tamami Kobayashi and Adrian Gonzalez.

As an art educator, Maldonado founded the "Taller de arte joven de Tocoal" project, where he developed, during a 10-year period, his own educational art methodology. Maldonado has exhibited in solo and group mural projects in Miami, El Paso, Phoenix, Buffalo and Villahermosa, Tabasco, where he mixed contemporary themes with native Mexican mythologies.

He has participated in solo and group exhibits at the Augusta Savage Gallery, University of Massachusetts; Eleana Ortega Cultural Center, Mount Holyoke College; Young Artist Art Gallery, Scottsdale Center for the Arts; University Art Gallery, Milwaukee, Wis., and the Cultural Contemporary Art Center, Villahermosa, Tabasco.

Leandro Soto is a Cuban born artist with 30 years of professional international experience as an artist and educator. He has exhibited his creations in 72 solo art shows and in 209 group exhibitions in art museums and galleries around the

world. Soto was one of the leading avant-garde artists in Cuba during the 1980's. He participated in the renowned "Volumen Uno," art movement in Havana in 1981 as the first performance-installation artist in Cuba; a movement that is noted to have begun a new period in Cuban art.

He has participated as a Visiting Artist at Whittier College, The Ohio State University, Wheaton College, Amherst College, Smith College and the University of New York at Buffalo. Currently, Soto is Senior Lecturer, Artist-in-Residence, at Arizona State University, West Campus, where he exhibits his art and created interdisciplinary art performances presentations every year.

Soto is represented by the Paulina Miller Gallery in Phoenix. His work is in the permanent collection of the National Museum of Art, Havana, Cuba; the Art Museum of Fort Lauderdale; Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami; Florida International University and private art collections.