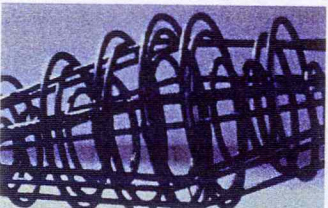
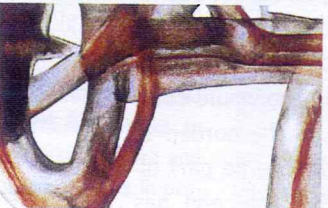
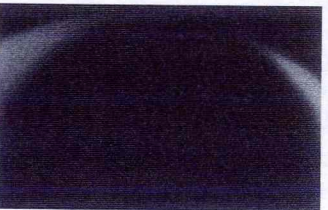
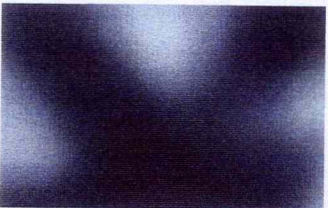
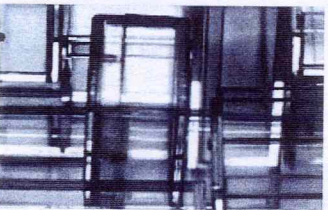
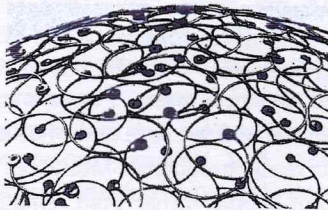
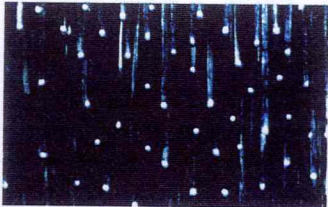
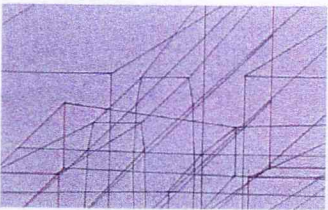
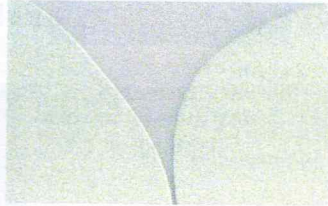
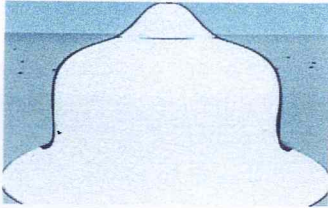


fission / fusion



contemporary art from mexico & usa

artists from mexico city and washington dc at the institute of mexico

curated by berta kolteniuk and gabriela molina

mauricio	alejo	maggie	michael
antonio	sánchez	d a n	steinhilber
pedro	reyes	paula	crawford
ma. josé de la	macorra	wendy	ross
santiago	borja	brandon	morse
héctor	zamora	andrea	haffner

february 27-march 31, 2003
institute of mexico
washington d.c.

Today's art deals with many issues beyond nationality. As a Mexican artist involved in the local visual arts scene who has lived in Washington, DC for three years, I found many similarities between what I see here and what Mexican artists are currently producing. Motivated to work with a group of people rather than remaining isolated in my studio, I wanted to present our contemporary vision to the local art community and create a cultural exchange. This exhibition stems from the need to create a collective project, that is to say, art as collective experience; a creative process that began in the planning stage one year ago after I started seeking out artists. I had the opportunity to meet them, talk to them, and even work with them, an aspect that in and of itself has made this a memorable experience. I also wanted to find someone with whom I could share my role as curator, someone committed who would collaborate with me from the other side of the border. I invited Gabriela Molina, an art historian, to be part of this experience. She resides in Mexico City and has worked very closely with the Mexican artists.

We arrived at the title and concept of fission/fusion. Its double meaning describes two ways of reproduction: fission is the separation of cells or atoms, whereas fusion is the opposite process by which two cells come together and create a new one. This exhibition is about the course of life. Separation and togetherness are metaphors of what we are, and what we choose as individuals, as cultures, as nations, and, ultimately, as global directions.

Berta Kolteniuk

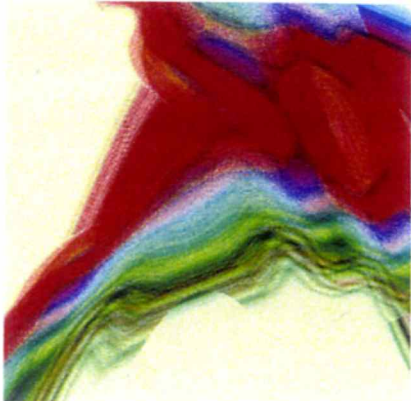
"In this attempt to reveal parallels between artists from two countries that share one of the longest borders in the world, the Institute discovered an excellent opportunity to reflect, as many of us have in today's global society, on the following questions: Are we coming closer together...? Or are we still distant neighbors?"

Ignacio Duran
Director

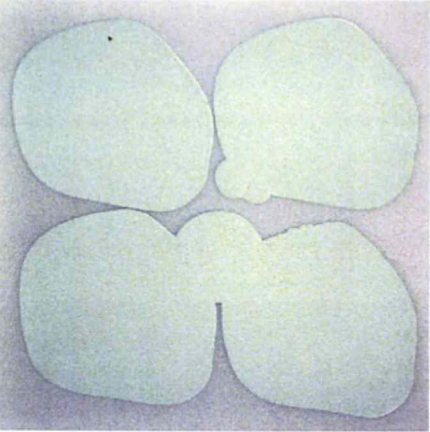
antonio sánchez
mexico city, 1969

His work reproduces the phenomenon of light refraction by dividing multiple waves of the color spectrum across transparent surfaces to create mathematic landscapes, microsystems, and micromaps of light.

His digital graphics illustrate different relationships between color, form, textures, patterns, movement, and dimension. They recall the visual representations of divinity through geometric abstraction encountered in Huichol, Tibetan, or Arab ancestral cultures, as well as the more contemporary Op Art movement. -Studies in Graphic Design and Illustration, European Institute of Design, Milan, Italy. BA, Lombardia Italy. Exhibitions in Mexico Milán, Madrid, Johannesburg, Menlyn Center, Pretoria.



reflexio 3, 2003
digital print on light box
34.5 x 30.5 x 5 in



plain jane, 2002
latex/acrylic
39 x 39.5 in

maggie michael
milwaukee, wi 1974

Michael's work includes associations with liquid pours and drips and their drying stages by housing a context for redeemed mishap, which privileges the liquid through intentionality, control, animation, and nurture.

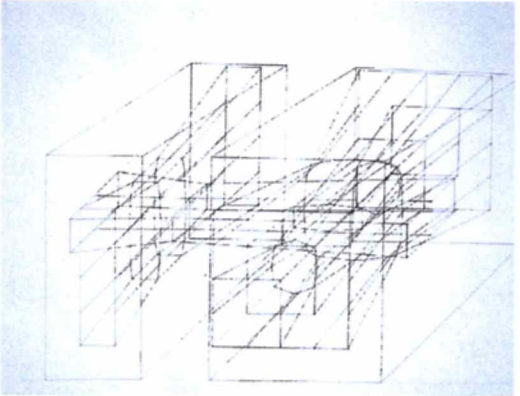
The organization and placement of housepaint, establishes content that refers to and eventually undermines its own materiality. The paintings become a form of animation through manipulated pours and drips and their drying skins. These "action pours" provoke a reading beyond formalism. MFA, American University. MA, San Francisco State University. BFA, University of Wisconsin, 1996. Exhibitions in Washington DC, and California.

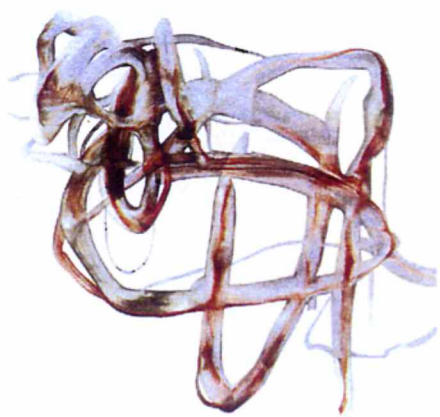
intersecciones, 2003
installation with nylon thread
197 x 118 x 98 in

héctor zamora
mexico city, 1974

His work focuses on space perception. His research on language, mathematics, design, art, and architecture is used to shape specific sites and includes commercial construction.

-BA, in Graphic Communications and Design, National University of Mexico City. Lightweight Structural Design Faculty of Architecture, National University of Mexico City. Exhibitions in different places in Mexico City. His work has been selected for Mexico's 19th and 20th National Young Art Encounters. He currently works in production for the Jumex Collection and directs LSD; an independent office dedicated to the development of lightweight structure architectural projects.





no he perdido nada, 2002
oil/canvas, 71 x 71 in

santiago borja
mexico city, 1970

Santiago Borja's work explores a corporeal ideal constituted in space and time through sensorial impulses, a conceptual body that has left semi-transparent prints on his canvases. The vibration of light in painting is what most interests Borja, light shines more forcefully from the white background of these canvases, irradiating from where the painter's hand is least evident. - Studies, Ibero-American University; National University of Mexico; Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw; Art Student League of New York; National Center of Art, Mexico City; Central Saint Martins, London. Exhibitions in Mexico City, Guadalajara, London, Ireland.

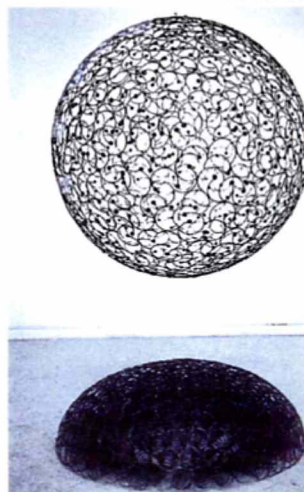
wendy ross

native of washington, dc

Ross has been a keen observer of the structural geometry of microorganisms. She has distilled a series of sculptural interpretations that seek to capture not

the appearance, but the life force of natural phenomena. In her work, fission and fusion operate in different contexts and scales, ranging from the microscopic to the cosmic. "My work is a dialogue with the animate world, and I'd like to think that my forms live and breathe". -California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco Art Institute. MFA Rhode Island School of Design. Her work has been featured in numerous museum exhibitions including the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; Neuberger Museum in New York; De Cordova Museum & Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Massachusetts, and the Boston World Trade Center.

installation, 1998-9
welded and coiled steel
93 x 60 x 60 in



andrea haffner

she grew up in gallup,
new mexico, 1971

In her photographic series Ms. Haffner distills the human form into abstract images reflecting contour and light. This effect is achieved through manipulations in the exposure and processing of the originally "focussed" images in the darkroom. Major lines and shapes bleed beyond their boundaries, washing over detail. What remains is a kind of embryonic shadow, a reference to biological origins, seeds of life.

-College of Santa Fe, Wesleyan, BA University in Connecticut. Her photography and sculpture have been widely exhibited both locally and nationally. She was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

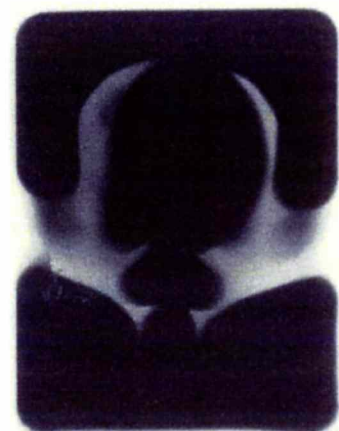


figure study,
inverse 3, 2003
silver gelatin print
9 x 7 in

dan steinhilber

His art involves familiar products that are staples to the consumer from the commercial and domestic realms. The transformation of these products from throw-aways to modules of formal construction is fundamental to his investigation. His works engage a dialogue with painting and installation that reference a divergent range of painting, color, and sculptural language. His work comes to life in the place where high art concerns meet with everyday experience, where ideas are made accessible through the significance of the materials chosen. MFA American University. BFA Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. Exhibitions in Washington DC, Baltimore MD, Mclean, VA, New York, NY, and Artpoint, Art Basel, Miami Beach, Fl.



installation
trash bags, shop/vac
144 x 144 x 120 in

untitled, 2002
oil/canvas
80 x 60 in



paula crawford
berkeley, california

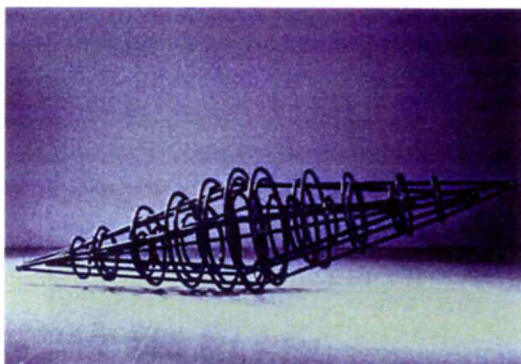
Crawford describes painting as an antidote to official media culture. "Abstract painting, has remained an alternative arena for thought, based in non-linear relations and structured improvisation rather than mimesis". Just prior to September 11th, she started a new series of paintings derived from old television news footage from the Persian Gulf war, views of the antiballistic missile fire through night vision cameras. "These 'light showers' are, at once incredibly beautiful and terrifying. They became a kind of obsession for me. After September 11th I understood more clearly what it was like to be on the ground beneath an attack. -MFA, San Francisco Art Institute. The Whitney Museum of American Art. San Francisco Art Institute, BFA. University of California at Berkeley. Exhibitions in New York, California, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, Washington DC, Peru, Paraguay, and Canada. She currently teaches at George Mason University.

maría José de la macorra

mexico city, 1964

Ma. José has a free transit through montages in which ceramics, objects, graphics, installation, video, and ambience converge, by the concept for poetic elaboration: the nature of the body, the corporeal. She offers a set of images that tell the story of the generic and vital processes experienced by a fictitious corporeal entity. The inextricable relationship between what is known as biomatter and the breath that brings it to life. -BA in Visual Arts, National University of Mexico City. Exhibitions in Mexico City, Monterrey, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Quebec, Canada.

ad infinitud, 1999
metal covered with tire
118 x 28 x 28 in



fission/fusion

by gabriela molina

This exhibition grew out of the idea to unite the work of artists from Washington, DC and Mexico City. The motive: to celebrate communications between not-so-distant neighbors. Our initial approach to their works consisted of a selection that reflected our taste for organic, clean, balanced, well-constructed forms. Afterwards, we began establishing another kind of relationship between the pieces in order to articulate a well-grounded debate that would be open to different interpretations.

Each work coincides -regardless of the artist's nationality, the visual media used, the type of materials with which they interacted and how their individual proposals were developed- in a metaphoric creation reminiscent of geometric and organic forms. These metaphors can be related to the principles of abstract painting, understood as geometric construction through the reduction of pictorial elements. Through abstraction, artists have attempted to transcend towards nature, constructing images in an attempt to define the undefined, transforming the perception and comprehension of diverse aspects that compose and unleash the phenomenon of life. This can be interpreted as a spiritual search conducive to communion and contemplation; that is to say, the utopian atmosphere characteristic of the abstract phenomenon during the early avant garde. These works await perception from this perspective, against the spectators' inertia that reduces artistic activity to the production of consumer objects.

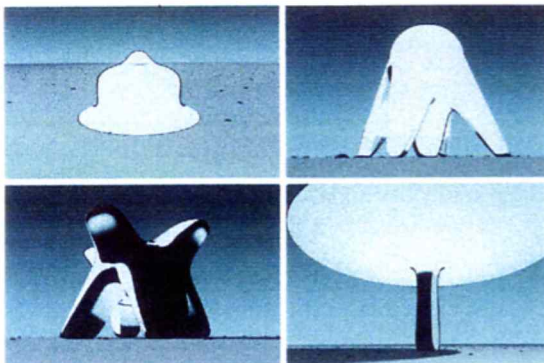
What we suggest here is that the artist be understood as a creator and generator of images whose main theme is the representation of nature. The understanding we have of nature originates in a new scientific perspective, enabling us to understand our surroundings and relate to the world in a different way. In this sense, a great deal of contemporary artistic production has dealt with science and technological development, causing some artists to visually articulate concepts that are scientific in nature.

The concept of nature as matter is sustained through an immaterial system of patterns of pure form in constant flux. In other words, what we call matter is nothing more than an interweaving of patterns composed of preexisting forms and of abstracts conveying the phenomenon of life in terms of proportion, sequence, and transformation. Our interest lies in associating this natural phenomenon with the formal structure of the pieces included in this exhibition. We find that this way, on a bi-dimensional plane, the representation of organic forms is suspended in an equilibrium between weight and lightness, geometric designs that represent the behavior of light through spokes and radii of energy, networks of interconnection similar to the internal structure of body fluids: Within a three-dimensional space, constructions of geometric planes intersect creating radiographs of the light spectrum, fission/fusion of atomic particles, networks of molecular structures and, finally, a symbolic description of the molecular exchange that takes place during the vital energy process of respiration.

pedro reyes
mexico city, 1972

Pedro Reyes approach to art by making sculpture, video, photography etc. His morphogenetic, concerning

the origin and evolution of form, instead of visualizing a form and then finding ways to create it, firstly he investigates a constructive method and then looks to see which form it leads to. A decisive step in this evolution is geometry, which sets the parameters within the material will take form. -Exhibitions in Mexico City, Shanghai Biennale, China. Jumex Foundation. PS1 New York- KW Berlin, London, Paris, Rotterdam.



pedro reyes/José castro
pranha, 2003
video animation, 2.30 min

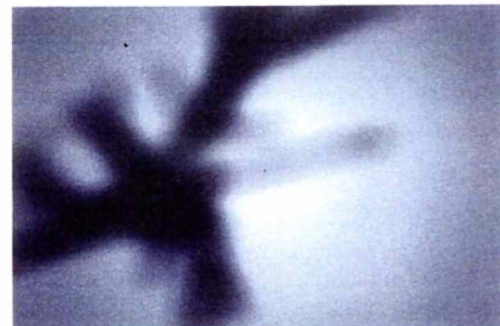
brandon morse

arlington texas, 1974

The focus of his work is on the interaction of sets of objects, actions and inter-

actions, from a singular cellular scale to the massive set of reactions that take place in the environment. On the environmental side, forces of nature, such as precipitation and fire are shown at an extreme distance as a means of presenting traumatic and violent events as benign and, for lack of a better word, beautiful images which betray the true nature of the actions taking place.

-BFA University of Wisconsin. MFA, The Ohio State University. His work in installation, digital video, sculpture and sound has been shown in exhibitions, animation festivals, and film festivals in Dublin, Ireland, Los Angeles, Seoul Cyber Film Festival '99 Seoul, South Korea. He currently teaches at the University of Maryland.



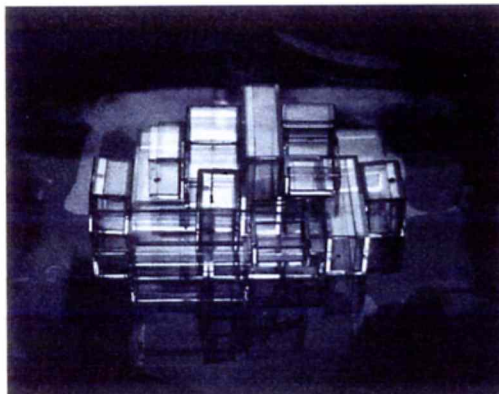
untitled, 2003
video installation

imagen 5, imágenes
para un mundo mejor series, 2001
silver gelatin print, 43.5 x 55 in
courtesy omr gallery

mauricio alejo
mexico city, 1969

The metaphor of transparency,
transparency as illusion, illu-

sion as all that which will soon no longer exist. He portrays a paradise that, like all utopias, faces the future but can only be fulfilled in the past. This illusion can be interpreted as the fragility of memory, the fragility of a better world that exists only as an adult's projection towards infancy. - BA Intercontinental University of Mexico, MA from New York University, through a Fulbright Scholarship. Exhibitions in Mexico, Houston, Montreal, Kyoto, Artistic residence in Vermont. Represented by OMR Gallery in Mexico City and Throckmorton Fine Art in New York.



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anne norvell



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