

FLORMAYORAL



PISA – CORAL GABLES  
IMAGINED CITIES | 2013

————— by —————

FLORMAYORAL

Curated by Dennys Matos



*“Selective blindness is optional.*

*Behold what most of us choose not to see.”*

*– Flor Mayoral*

## EXHIBITION

CURATOR: Dennys Matos

PRINTER: Associated Photo

COORDINATORS: Carlos Corradine

Patricia Fuller, Karel Foti

PRODUCTION: Carlos Corradine, Patricia Fuller

## CATALOGUE

ESSAYS: Jorge Brioso, Adolfo Barattolo, Dennys Matos

TRANSLATOR: Ileana Fuentes, Giuseppe Garufi

DESIGN CONCEPT: Marcelo Llobell

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Vanesa Carpignano Nores

COPY EDITORS: Andrew Pompa, ML, DM, FM

PUBLISHER: Contemporary Art Masters, Inc.

PRINTER: Color Press Printing

COORDINATORS: ML, CC

All Images © Flor Mayoral 2012, 2013. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system,

or transmitted in any form or any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying,

recording or otherwise without the express written consent of the author.

## CORAL GABLES MUSEUM

285 Aragon Avenue

Coral Gables, FL 33143

COVER: *'Italia, Italia', 2012*

## INDEX

JORGE BRIOSO

5

ADOLFO BARATTOLO

6

DENNYS MATOS

7

ARTWORK

9

FLOR MAYORAL

35

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

36

This collection is composed of a series of 3 C-Prints;

on Kodak Endura metallic paper and

bonded to aluminum and 1/8" non-glare plexiglass.

The Coral Gables Museum was inaugurated in 2011 with a clear mission to preserve and promote the culture and historic heritage of the city. To preserve, because a plan of action was needed to authenticate the brief historical memory of the community as an element of social, cultural and educational cohesion that would serve as a reference for future generations. To promote, because in a global world, by sharing the history, experiences, and values that make a community unique is the best way to grow and advance in the new socioeconomic and cultural challenges facing all of us in the 21st century.

As part of this effort, the Coral Gables Museum presents *'Pisa - Coral Gables: Imagined Cities'*, by Cuban-American photographer Flor Mayoral as one of the events within the scope of their efforts to celebrate 2013 as of the Year of Italian Culture in the United States and the special bond that exists between the city of Pisa and theirs. The exhibition is composed of 20 color photographs of medium format, half of them taken in Pisa during the summer of 2012, the other half taken this year in Coral Gables and made specifically for the purpose of being displayed during this special occasion.

Through her images, the author creates a dialogue between two cities that showcase her viewpoint about the concepts of community, trans-culturalization, tradition and modernity as symptoms of the accelerated mutations that today's world brings about in cities, turning them into veritable centers of production of contemporary culture. Through the poetic language of photography and a current artistic pulse, Flor Mayoral invites us to creatively interpret the young social and cultural history of Coral Gables and the aforementioned fundamental concepts. The comparison between these two cities that lay across the Atlantic serves to illustrate the effect that globalization has had on these two communities.

**JORGE BRIOSO**  
Carleton College, MN

Throughout the years, a collaborative effort between cultural institutions of the United States and Italy has become a tradition. The year 2013 gives a special meaning to the growing intercultural exchange between our two countries, since we are celebrating the Year of Italian Culture in the United States. This special year serves to bring to the forefront cultural and artistic projects that highlight and recognize our culture.

I am delighted that the Coral Gables Museum, joining the ongoing celebrations, has organized this event that promotes and deepens the sociocultural ties between two sister cities: Coral Gables and Pisa. Within the context of sisterhood, we are pleased to present *'Pisa - Coral Gables: Imagined Cities'*, an exhibition by Cuban-American photographer Flor Mayoral. Her images extend a bridge that serves to bring about a greater sociocultural exchange between our respective communities. An interchange that invites us to make a greater commitment to strengthen the bonds that brought these two cities together.

Attraverso gli anni, lo sforzo collaborativo fra le istituzioni culturali degli Stati Uniti e Italiane e' ormai divenuto una tradizione. L'anno 2013 da' un significato ancora piu' speciale al crescente intercambio culturale fra le nostre nazioni, dal momento che stiamo celebrando l' Anno della Cultura Italiana negli Stati Uniti. Quest'anno speciale , serve per porre sulla prima linea culturale ed artistica, progetti che mettono in risalto la nostra cultura e ne danno riconoscimento.

Sono lieto che il Museo di Coral Gables, aggiungendosi alle celebrazioni, abbia organizzato questo evento che promuove e approfondizza i legami culturali fra le citta' sorelle: Coral Gables e Pisa. Dentro il contesto si sorellaggio, e' nostro piacere presentare *'Pisa-Coral Gables: Citta' Immaginate'*, una esibizione della fotografa Cubano-Americana Flor Mayoral. Le sue immagini estendono un ponte che serve a portare un cambio socioculturale ancora piu' grande fra ne nostre rispettive comunita. Un intercambio che ci invita ad una ancor piu' grande promessa, quella di rinforzare i legami che hanno portato queste due citta' ad unirsi.

ADOLFO BARATTOLO  
Consul General

I In photography, a particular gaze is transformed into the doorway to the imagination. In this context, to view means to instantly encapsulate time, space and reality, with a very contemporary sensitivity. *'Pisa-Coral Gables: Imagined Cities'* shows how in Flor Mayoral's work, there is a marked interest in the nuances of the multiple expressions of all things urban. Most of all, in her work we can appreciate a vision about the rich and contradictory metabolism that results from the interaction between the city and its inhabitants in a global context. Hers are works that navigate from urban interiors to exteriors, from public to private spaces. At times she depicts crowds, at others she portrays the individual engaged in everyday rituals and ordinary chores, depicting life's routines as they are crafted in the interaction between the city and its inhabitants. In that reality, the traditional and the modern, the global and the local, leisure and culture coexist, albeit in permanent confrontation. Mayoral's pieces are like vignettes that pulsate a breath of time in the life of Pisa and Coral Gables, anywhere, anytime, in any conventional or not-so-common place, caught in a fleeting moment just prior to their disappearance in the very next instant.

II A vigilant observer can decipher that the author uses *City with Tower* and *Golf and The City* as the starting points of the discourse that she articulates through her exhibition. Both works are panoramic and employ the most soft-spoken photographic language of the landscape genre, such as using foreground detail to attain a greater visual depth of field. Both images speak to us about the city. However, in her work from Pisa, our gaze is drawn to the sunrise in the ancient city, at that magical moment of light wherein the viewer and Pisa are at once engulfed. This is an image that takes us to the dense interior of the city. By contrast, her Coral Gables work captures the peripheral spaces of a sprawling city, where the downtown skyline seems to be wrapped by the foliage of the landscape. This imagery conveys the quality of an urban exterior, where the edges of the vegetation and construction intertwine, creating a singular weave between the urban and the rural.

III In *'Pisa - Coral Gables: Imagined Cities'*, Flor Mayoral registers, not only the subjectivity of a gaze that expresses itself through urban landscapes that distinguish and identify both cities, she does this by recurring to her particular mastery of the diverse genres of the photographic discourse.

Which is why, while we witness the staging of this dialogue between two cities, the author activates a repertoire of photographic techniques that span from photojournalism through landscape or documentary (*City with Tower* and *Green in the City*), to conceptual photography related to still lifes of scenes and objects (*Edible Objects* and *Points of Reference*), to the portrait genre (*Medusa* and *From the Silence Series: #4*). These ranges of expressive options from the perspective of the poetics of photography allow her to reflect on the discourse about our lives in the city. Mimes and medusas, rich and poor, natives and immigrants, all live in these imagined cities, wherein we transit between Baroque interiors and tropical exteriors, from Pisa's Renaissance architecture to the Italian Village in Coral Gables without missing a beat.

In this dialogue that lures us to imagine cities through images, we find objects that range from garbage bins to foodstuffs, and even national symbols. Nevertheless, we notice a special interest in the everyday happenings of anonymous individuals, of crowds that go through life re-enacting those daily events that are also anonymous, or that become unacknowledged because they are so commonplace. In spite of this, one can spot psychological and socio-cultural characteristics that reveal our times, our world as it unfolds while we inhabit these surroundings.







*'Mercato e Motorini', 2012*  
*'Man and Crowd', 2012*







*'Pisa in Relief', 2012*  
*'From the Series: Silence #4', 2012*









*'Interior with Piano', 2012*  
*'Green and The City', 2013*





*'Bacchanalia #2', 2013*  
*'In the Garden', 2013*





*'On the Outside Looking In, Self - Portrait', 2013*  
*'Interior with Gardening Tools', 2013*





*'Points of Reference', 2013*  
*'Medusa', 2013*







*'Men at Work', 2013*  
*'Giro D'Italia', 2013*





**FLOR MAYORAL** (Havana, 1955). Resides and works in Miami.

Doctor of Medicine, University of Florida - 1981

Her first photographs from the late seventies and beginning of the eighties address the private space from the aesthetics of the family photo album. These are scenes that capture the intimacy and the habits of domestic life, narrated with images encrypted in autobiography. In the nineties, she develops a special interest in natural themes and landscape photos in general. This interest coincides with a greater control, on the part of the author, of the techniques and tools of scientific digital photography applied to plant photography and other natural or artificial elements. These pictures of great close-ups of natural elements are influenced by the work of authors of modernity such as Imogen Cunningham. This is when she begins her exploration of the expressive possibilities of the image. Towards the end of the nineties and the beginning of 2000, the theme of the city, its architecture and its urbanism as a stage for the contradictory relationship between individuality and overcrowding, begins to take a leading role in her work, where the influence of Jeff Wall can be appreciated. These are works that "look", in a sort of voyeuristic style, at the gestures and attitudes either of individuals or of a group; they speak to us of life in the cities of our time.

Already in the XXI century, Flor Mayoral performs a deep immersion in contemporary portraiture photography, making this genre the poetical support of her photographic project. She investigates the mechanisms of the expressionist language of the portrait in works like those of Thomas Struff, taking it to its ultimate expressive aesthetic consequences.

Her portraits in extreme close-ups "document", from a forensic visual perspective, the most absolute expressiveness of the face, its most absolute reality enriching our psychological perception of the picture. Her photographic project, Before (Now) After, can be viewed as her most personal work; one with an instinctive mastery of the symbolic capital of contemporary photography. It also constitutes a risky and audacious conceptual proposal on the updating on the genre of the portrait in postmodernity.



**SOLO** (Selection)

- 2013 Pisa-Coral Gables: Ciudades imaginadas. Museo de Historia de Coral Gables. Miami, FL
- 2011 'Peace Love World Does Art Basel'. Coral Gables, FL
- 2010 'Bird Road Art District Walk'. Aperture Studios. Miami, FL
- 'Wildlife Exhibition'. Miami Center benefiting Metro Zoo. Miami FL

**COLLECTIVE** (Selection)

- 2011 'In Focus 15th Annual Juried Exhibition'. Palm Beach Photographic Centre. West Palm Beach, FL
- 2009 'Art Box'. Voices for Children Foundation. Miami FL
- 2007 'Tropical Colors'. Three Art Studio. Key Gallery, FL
- 2006 'Encounter with Nature'. Luzma Gallery. Miami, FL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | MY PARENTS, who lead by example, and that to this day, continue to be my heroes. TO (ALL) OF MY CHILDREN: for always being supportive and encouraging their child-like mother. MARCELO LLOBELL: for making me believe. DENNY MATOS: for jumping in headfirst. CARLOS CORRADINE: for his many talents and for doing the impossible with a smile. NESTOR RODRIGUEZ: for making sure that my art, along with his music, reach the universe. JORGE SORÍ: for your kind advice and suggestions. CLAUDIO PASTOR: for his kindness and ready assistance. CHRISTINE RUPP: for her collaboration in doing this event. BOOBALAH (KAREL FOTI): for being my 'biffel' and for her undying support and friendship. PATRICIA FULLER: for using 100% of her enthusiasm and persuasive ways to make this exhibition a success.



CONTEMPORARYARTMASTERS

1st EDITION: Pisa-Coral Gables | Imagined Cities 2013  
CATALOGUE # / 500 | May 2013



