

# ARTE NO ES FÁCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Links Hall is pleased to present, **ARTE NO ES FÁCIL**  
*An exhibition series featuring the collaborative work of artists from Cuba and the United States*  
co-created by Marilyn Volkman and Danielle Paz

Weekend One: January 20, 21 & 22  
Weekend Two: February 17, 18 & 19  
**Weekend Three: March 16, 17 & 18**

**ARTE NO ES FÁCIL** is a self-reflexive artwork based in creating relationships beyond pictures between Cuba and the United States. The project presents its final weekend of exhibitions in the United States exploring public presentation as a means of creating a more expansive discussion about art and current political realities. Collaborative works produced by pairings of emerging artists from Havana and Chicago will be presented on **March 16th, 17th and 18th** at Links Hall. Many Havana-based artists will be in attendance through cultural visas secured by **ARTE NO ES FÁCIL**, Linkshall and the MacArthur Foundation. For more information about the artists and the exhibitions visit [www.artenoefacil.com](http://www.artenoefacil.com)

March performances include works produced by national and international artists, *Omni Zona Franca, Red Rover Series, Zachary Cahill, Raychel Carrion, Dana Carter, Nestor Mederos, Rachel Herman, Anthony Blackhood, Javier Castro, Ana Olema, Jason Pallas, Sam Stalling, Duniesky Martin, Celia y Yunior, Sage and Lindholm, Susana Delahante Matienzo, Andrea Smith, Ricardo Miguel Hernandez and Casey Smallwood, Q&A with artists to follow performances.*

Weekend Three:

**Friday, March 16 at 8pm**

Sam Stalling (Chicago) / Duniesky Martin (Havana)  
Javier Castro (Havana) / Links Hall (Chicago)  
Celia y Yunior (Havana) / Sage and Lindholm (Kansas City)  
Raychel Carrion Jaime (Havana) / Zach Cahill (Chicago)  
Marilyn Volkman / Danielle Paz (project co-creators)

**Saturday, March 17 at 8pm**

Susana Delahante Matienzo (Havana) / Andrea Smith (USA)  
Ricardo Miguel Hernandez (Havana) / Casey Smallwood (Chicago)  
Omni Zona Franca (Havana) / Red Rover Series (Chicago)

**Sunday, March 18 at 7pm**

Rachel Herman (Chicago) / Anthony Blackhood (Havana)  
Dana Carter (Chicago) / Nestor Mederos (Havana)  
Ana Olema (Havana) / Jason Pallas (Chicago)  
Marilyn Volkman / Danielle Paz (project co-creators)

**INFO & LOCATION:**

Links Hall is located at 3435 N. Sheffield Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657  
BROWN, PURPLE & RED line stop at Belmont and RED line Addison stop. For more information **773.281.0824** / [www.LinksHall.org](http://www.LinksHall.org)

\*Tickets \$15 at the Door / \$12 Online / \$10 Students & Seniors – *or pay what you can*  
*Links Hall promotes “pay what you can” programming so all can attend*

**ARTE NO ES FÁCIL** is generously supported by The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Links Hall, The University of Chicago: Department of Visual Art, The Open Practice Committee, Arts Council, The Claire Kantor Foundation, Art Chicago, NEXT, FOTA, and many generous private donations.

## **Project Co-creator Bios:**

**Danielle Paz** is a Chicago-based artist using video and time-based media as the working-genesis to explore the boundaries of shared experience among people. Her work is inscribed in the physical application of film history and practice, media theory, and contemporary debates surrounding subjectivity to question the lasting power of images. Danielle received her MFA from the University of Chicago in Visual Arts and her BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design in Video, minoring in Photography. Danielle is full-time faculty teaching Photography and Video at Truman College in Chicago, IL. [www.danpaz.com](http://www.danpaz.com)

**Marilyn Volkman** is a Chicago-based artist who inhabits structures both institutional and non-institutional in nature. Volkman's interest lies in the intersubjective application of language and image to manifest ethereal, existential questions about seemingly concrete things. Her practice can be seen as a quasi-documentary approach which builds a relational-narrative inside and alongside the changing energy of existing structures. It can also be viewed as a method for understanding which asks questions on the boundary of control and desire regarding the relationship between chance, intention and meaning within larger social, economic and political spheres. Marilyn received her MFA in Visual Arts from the University of Chicago in 2009 and her BFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Arizona in 2007. She currently teaches in the College of Art and Sciences at Roosevelt University. [www.marilynvolkman.com](http://www.marilynvolkman.com)

## **Participating Artist Bios for Weekend Three:**

**Duniesky Martin** is a graduate of the Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana, Cuba (2009). He currently works as an artist, professor and the head of the Painting Department at the School of Visual Arts. His work deals with adaptations of heroism and the contextual relativity of values as components of aesthetic paradigms, the collective imagination, cultural stereotypes and media. His work has been exhibited in ARTLAB21 - Hoeschhaus Hansa, Dortmund, Germany / Shelley & Donald Rubin Private Collection, New York / Proyecto Continentes, Octava Bienal de Mercosur / Filmoteca de Andalucía & La Fragua Belalcazar, Cordoba, Spain / Novena y Décima Bienal de La Habana, Cuba / Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Wifredo Lam, Havana, Cuba / Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, Havana, Cuba / Fundación Ludwig de Cuba, Havana / Galería Servando, Havana, Cuba y obtuvo la Residencia Internacional Batiscafo, Triangle Art Trust y Gasworks, de Gran Bretaña in Havana, Cuba.

**Sam Stalling**, My work as an integrated media artist includes animation, sound installation, video, performance and web-based projects. I employ play, color, and pop culture references in projects that facilitate collaboration and community. Whether I am asking the audience to participate in a short dance routine as I do in my web-based project, *Dance On* or to explore and mix layers of audio as I do in my sound installation, *Pedestrian Operator*, it is critical that the audience's interaction with my work become part of my work. My performative web-based project *Dance On* invites viewers to enact a dance that is later uploaded to the *Dance On* website and integrated with results from a Google API image search to produce provoking imagery. In *Dance On* as in other recent projects, improvisational and participatory interactions are key components. My relationship to improvisation and performance began during my tenure as an ensemble member of the Chicago Kings (2001-2006), a performance troupe focused on drag king expression, camp, and theatrical spectacle.

**Javier Castro**. From 2004 to today Javier Castro has completed videos and installations with the intent of capturing the modes of survival within one part of Cuban contemporary society. His work has gone from performance to direct registry with an anthropological perspective. Initially, subjects carry out actions in front of the camera that are previously discussed and agreed on, later their familiarity allows the artist to position the lens as another listener. The artist does not involve politics, nor judge the context. More accurately, he presents it, explores it, and leaves us to see paths of frustrations and worldviews of the common subject in "marginal" zones of the island. Modes of daily cultural resistance, where those in charge are the ones with the loudest voice, the most terrifying pose, the most physical wounds. Javier Castro's work has been shown in Cuba, USA, Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay, Ecuador, Argentina, UK, Germany, Belgium, Italy and Spain. He has a Bachelor of Arts from the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, a Bachelor of Arts, PP.Sch. Cuba, attached to the Columbus University of Mexico, a Diploma in the Art of Conduct, and a diploma from San Alejandro Academy of Fine arts in Havana.

**Paul and Kate** have been working collaboratively since 1998 and consider an interactive process their most vital medium. Their performance work centers primarily at the interface of the body and the digital, while object-based work explores mimesis, transformation, and play – most often in the form of installation and painting. Their current practice investigates and relays various experiences with public/live art as it concerns communication, issues of identity and truth within the artist-audience relationship, the body as art object, and the practice of art as an exploration and critique of everyday life.

**Celia y Yunior**. Since the year 2004 we have worked as a duo (Celia González--Yunior Aguiar). In each work we both participate in the entire work process, from the conception of the idea to its final production. This micro society has served us as entertainment to confront other socialization spaces. For that reason, on occasions, we have collaborated with other artists interested in diverse ways in the social context. For us, it is vital to invest time in conversation not only about art but about what preoccupies us as social individuals, and this is why it is important to talk to those with whom we share intentions and a system of work.

**Raychel Carrion Jaime** is a graduate of the Instituto Superior de Arte, Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas de San Alejandro, and Tania Bruguera's Cátedra de Arte de Conducta. His work has been exhibited widely at Centro Nacional de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, Pabellón Cuba, Galería Habana, Teatro Nacional de Cuba and Tejadillo 214 all in Havana. He was included in *Evento de Video Camagüey* in Camagüey, the Institute of International Visual Arts in Londres, and he participated in the 10th Havana Biennial, the 9th Havana Biennial and the Kwangju Biennial in South Korea. Raychel is interested in social stereotypes and the relationship between the stereotype and the media as a space of power. In recent years Raychel's work has drawn increasingly from the pragmatic and psychological field of Cuba, a huge laboratory subject to its own inclement conditions.

**Zachary Cahill** is an interdisciplinary artist whose work has been exhibited at the Center for Art and Media Technology in Karlsruhe, Germany (ZKM); Aarhus Kunstbygning in Aarhus, Denmark; DeVos Museum of Art, Marquette, MI; and three walls, Chicago, IL, amongst other. His writings have appeared in the Journal of Visual Culture, the journal RETHINKING MARXISM, Proximity Magazine, and Artforum.com. Currently he is a Lecturer in the Department of Visual Arts & serves as the Open Practice Committee coordinator at the University of Chicago.

**Andrea Smith.** Born in the United States, Andrea Smith does not claim any national allegiance. Investigating site-specific governmental taxonomies, she is interested in infrastructure as a shifting invention that can shape ideas of centralized power. Andrea believes new states can and will be erected with the jurisdiction of other states and that supremacy lies within the individual. Andrea's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, you may have seen it.

**Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo** lives and work in Havana, Cuba. Currently, she is pursuing her Postgraduate studies in New Media at Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HfG). Susana studied at the High Institute of Arts (ISA) in Havana, Cuba, and has participated in Braziers International Artists Workshop, Arte de Conducta, "INTERMEDIAR-Minbak", ARCO 07, and other extra-artistic workshops at the International Forensic Congress in Havana. Susana's work has been included in the 10th Havana Biennial, the 7th Gwangju Biennial, III Biennale Arts Actuels Réunion, in France, *Torbellino II\_Whirlwind II* at Galeria Habana, *Again and Again* curated by Adrian Paci at Galleria La Veronica Arte Contemporanea, Italy, and *Medium Religion* curated by Boris Groys and Peter Weibel at ZKM, Karlsruhe and Model Art and Niland Gallery, Sligo. In 2012 she will participate in the 2012 Havana Biennial. Susana's elaborately staged productions feature herself as a corpse and draw from a long tradition of self-portraits which serve as a memento reaching beyond death in attempt to keep the artist's memory as vivid as possible. By contrast, Susana's photographs immortalize a materialistic truth by simultaneously addressing the objectifying glance of the photographic camera, and the moment of death in the production of an image as well as of a corpse.

**Casey Smallwood** was born in Springfield, Missouri in 1981. She earned a BFA in Photography from Missouri State University (2005) and an MFA in Visual Art from the University of Chicago (2008). Smallwood's work uses a process of reenactment and recontextualization of found narratives from mass culture to create moments of crisis centered around the interplay of self-awareness and self-deception in everyday intimacies. Her work is as much what people see or participate in as it is the things that went into the making of that experience; it's the directing and performance of the piece as much as it is the final product. Smallwood has exhibited nationally including the College Art Association's *ARTSpace Media Lounge*, New York City (2011), *High Concept Laboratories*, Chicago (2011), *Ohio University Art Gallery* (2010), *Eel Space*, Chicago (2009), *Lumpen's Version 9 Festival*, Chicago (2010), *DOVA Temporary Gallery*, Chicago (2008). Smallwood lives and works in Chicago, Illinois.

**Ricardo Miguel Hernández**--Under a very studied and sensorial influence, Ricardo explores the history of Cuba and its cultural reality using audiovisual and photography. Usually based on the typical movie structure, Ricardo's video work uses the possibilities of cinematography esthetics, while his documentary photography is usually drawn to the expression and the quality of the camera angle. The perfect combination of all of these elements makes his work a discourse between one space and the other. Ricardo has recently exhibited at Fototeca de Cuba, Circus projects, Espacio Aglutinador, and the Ludwig Foundation, all in Cuba, and internationally at the 8th Bienal de Mercosur in Brazil, the 5th Fair Epiderme in Portugal, the Yerbabuena Center for the Arts in California, and E105 Studio in Bonn, Germany.

**Omni Zona Franca** is a multi-disciplinary Cuban arts collective with members who freely shift between different forms of expression (art, music, poetry, theatre, dance) in the embrace of art as everyday life. As curator Dannys Montes de Oca writes in the 9th Havana Biennial catalogue, Omni "is a group and a life experience emerging from the very entrails of the city; from its streets, scents, cries, music, voices, from its generous and anarchical happiness and its local flavour." As such, performance in some shape or another is the binding component of their collective actions, and they have been involved in over 200 events during nearly 7 years of organization. Regardless of the form of any individual project, performance or event all members are committed to the collaborative and transformative potential of art.

**Red Rover Series** is a series of readings that play with reading. Each event is designed as a reading experiment with participation by local, national, and international writers, artists, and performers. The series was founded in Chicago 2005 by Amina Cain & Jennifer Karmin and is currently curated by Jennifer Karmin and Laura Goldstein. Red Rover thinks about a diversity of aesthetics and approaches to language in their interdisciplinary approach to events and performances. They seek to present writing to a community through a variety of perspectives and dynamics, and through a diversity of writers and performers. The curators of the group are seen as facilitators of group experiences for the writers, artists, and audience members of Red Rover, and work in attempt to challenge the usual hierarchies that often play out in the literary and art world. Ultimately, Red Rover's main mode of operation is collaboration.

**Rachel Herman's** work has been exhibited nationally, including a recent solo show at Light Work in Syracuse, NY and group shows with Humble Arts (Manual Transmission in New York and the NADA Art Fair in Miami) and Photographic Center Northwest in Seattle. Other exhibitions include the Dolphin Gallery in Kansas City and HungryMan, The Experimental Station and Gallery 400 in Chicago. She was an Artist-in-Residence at Anderson Ranch and has participated in Review Santa Fe. She is currently an adjunct photography instructor at Columbia College in Chicago, and she holds an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of Chicago.

**Anthony Blackhood** was born on January 22, 1985 in the municipality of Marianao, Havana Cuba. The residence town, municipality Boyeros, in the allotment Abel Santamaría in street 242 between 247 and 249 building 42 apto.30; for his primary and secondary studies. Anthony graduated from the National Academy of Fine Arts San Alejandro in 2005 with an emphasis in sculpture. Anthony continues to study Scenic Design at The Superior Institute of Art (ISA), entering in 2008.

**Nestor Mederos** was born in Havana, Cuba in 1988. His work has been seen in FIVA y Cultura y Media, Argentina. International Film Festival, United States, Austrian's Cinema Topkino and Schikanedr Kino, Austria. Loop Festival y Proyector, Spain DVD Project, Del Sol St, Galery. FIVAC, Coloquio de Arte Digital, Cine en 60, La Cámara Azul y Kinocuba, Cuba. He has participated in shows like: Romerías de mayo, Holguín. Visuarte, Cienfuegos. El Almacén de la Imagen, Fidelio Ponce y Pequeño Formato, Camagüey. Espacio Cero, Ciego de Ávila. 2026, El Patrimonio de hoy RUTA JOVEN, Habana. Premios y menciones en: 2011 Coloquio de Arte Digital, FIVA, Salón de la Ciudad. 2010 Fidelio Ponce, 2009 Visuarte. He won a scholarship from LASA Ensayo Público No.5.

**Dana Carter's** practice is an ongoing exploration of the velocity of loss, the poetics of vision, word-play, and the slowness of the natural world. At the intersection of process, architecture, and admiration for the cosmos, Carter considers the line between observation and material experimentation in the studio. This collaboration with Nestor Sire de Mederos, raises questions of translation and communication across a vast distance. Dana Carter received an MFA from UIC in 2008 and currently teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the Department of Fiber and Material Studies. Recent exhibitions include: *Extra Terrestrial Carpet Obscura*, The American Institute of Architecture (New Orleans), *Midwinter: Embrace the Darkness*, Glass Curtain Gallery, Columbia College (Chicago) *Proposal for Blue Skies*, Devening Projects & Editions (Chicago), *Waiting for Daylight*, Iceberg Projects (Chicago.) Currently, Carter's work is on view at the Gahlberg Gallery at the College of DuPage.

**Ana Olema** was born in 1986, Holguin, Cuba. She studied in the Cathedra of the Behavior Art, a pedagogic project of Tania Bruguera. Her work has been exhibited in South Korea (2008), the Havana Biennales (2006, 2009), the Liverpool Biennale (2010), and she has participated in different collectives expositions in Cuba. She has also participated in different projects and events such as: Video International Festival "One Minute Festival", "Gantts Belgic", and "Travelling", an international event of performance and audiovisuals. Magazine Ver curaduria by Rirkrit Tiravanija. Thailand-New York. Cycle of Cuban video and cinema. Trans-Charco project. El Colmado Center, Barcelona. Selected workshops and residences include: MINBAK-INTERMEDIAE. Collateral to IFEMA ARCO Madrid Spain (2007). International Meeting of Urban Art Al-Zurich, Tranbia Cero which are productions from the "Cuban Soul/Atlantics Hymns " with the support of Patriotic Squadron and Champion Record Quito, Ecuador (2011). Currently Ana is working on a project called *Book as Art* in order to encourage the use of books as an art piece. She is a political activist and works with different groups of artists from urban cultures and civil societies from Cuba and different parts of the world.

**J. Thomas Pallas** received his MFA from the University of Chicago in 2008, focusing on the dialectics of abstraction/representation, authenticity/appropriation, complicity/political activity, and ethics/aesthetics. He currently teaches at the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, in the Foundations Department at the Illinois Institute of Art – Chicago, and leads The Creative Agency at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. He earned BA degrees in Studio Art/Art History and English from Rice University with a thesis focused on contemporary queer drama, and has also studied at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and the European College of Liberal Arts (Berlin). His work has been exhibited in Chicago and at venues throughout the country, such as Arthouse at the Jones Center (Austin), Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (Grand Rapids), Truman State University Art Gallery (Missouri), and the Indianapolis Art Center.

### **Links Hall Artistic Associates Program**

Links Hall's Artistic Associates program was launched to great success in Spring 2005, when three Artistic Associates each curated a month-long series of performance, based on expertise in their respective fields. These programs enhanced the quality of our artistic programs, generated significant press coverage, expanded audiences for new work at Links Hall, and allowed the development of new project funding relationships. This program now takes place annually, and each year's Artistic Associates participate on Links Hall's Programming Committee to select the subsequent year's Artistic Associates.

Links Hall is located at 3435 N. Sheffield Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657—convenient to the BROWN, PURPLE & RED line stop at Belmont and RED line Addison stop in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. For more information call **773.281.0824** or visit **[www.LinksHall.org](http://www.LinksHall.org)**

**Links Hall** is supported by Alphawood Foundation, AllState Insurance Company, Arts Midwest, Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development, The Boeing Company, The Chicago Community Trust, Cliff Dwellers Arts Foundation, The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, James S. Kemper Foundation, Lisa Dershin Creative Dance Fund, MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, National Performance Network, The Weasel Fund and many individuals.

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