

Sylvia

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SYLVIA RIQUEZES: Human Labyrinth

Sylvia Riquezes proposes a metaphysical space where the viewer comes into contact with his or her human condition. As we make our way along corridors and across rooms, we discover a mixed array of paintings, photographs, installations and videos that express the artist's philosophy. Every showroom hosts works that convey to the participants values related to life, to the self, and to humankind. The fundamental axis present in all the works is a red ball, which in different numbers and sizes, and organized in different ways in the different works, constitutes the main symbol the artist proposes. The red ball is "an emblem of humanity", as the artists states. It represents humankind and the human being in its daily struggle for life, its values, its vicissitudes, and its development. In some works, the red ball appears to be trapped, imprisoned, trying to escape; in others, it appears calm and balanced or it is projected against a blue sky in a poetic attitude denoting extreme freedom. The red ball is a metaphor for man's journey through life. It becomes a kind of living personage experiencing diverse changes and passages that allegorize the different stages of man and his circumstances: birth, childhood, play, innocence, randomness, will, union, discord, war and peace. Each work arouses feelings and emotions in the viewer. In each showroom, the viewer is faced with the challenge of discovering the subliminal message and experiencing an interior reality. In each work, the red ball reflects a circumstance of individual or collective life.

In "**Return to Origins**", the artist emphasizes the importance of returning to the human values, of being reborn in our original innocence, free from any cultural or social oppression, in a state of internal freedom. The pregnancy of the woman (who is the artist herself) also emphasizes the value of birth and of giving life. In the installation entitled "**Twister**", the artist highlights the importance of the interlacement of bodies, of human union achieved through play. "**Hear the Chime of Life**" is a vortex of little red balls in the manner of a "cyclone of money", each inscribed with words such as Prosperity or Poverty, which have a strong symbolic content and indicate the absorbing and cyclonic value of money.

In the geometrical series "**Circle I**", "**Circle II**", "**Circle III**", "**Half Circle**", "**Straight Line**", "**Spiral**" and "**Free Line**", the red balls are aligned in different geometric patterns symbolically representing the different human and group unions, as well as the internal states that man experiences. In **Circle II**, the balls bear the names of persons and one of them is black and is placed outside the circle, as an emblem of disunion and divergence. In "**Spiral**", the red balls symbolize human states of mind; each of them bears a human key word –Negativity, Unbalance, Worry, Attachment...Injustice, Unhappiness, Sadness– thus showing the importance of capturing man's internal facets. "**Blow Me This Bubble**" and "**Take One**" focus on the importance of recreation, of play and levity as key elements for living. In turn, the artist establishes a dialogue through the distance with W. Kandinsky and his new proposal that "A line is the union of successive points towards an infinite". Joining the balls as points along a line, Riquezes exalts the concept of Union = Infinite.

The works entitled "**Tic Tac Toe or a Political Game**", "**Peace Inside**" and "**Money Ties**" point to other concerns of a political and social nature. In "**Tic Tac Toe or a Political Game**", the faces of Osama Bin Laden, Fidel Castro, Hugo Chávez and Sadam Hussein stand out as icons of evil in the world; thus the artist symbolizes the political games in which the fate of the world is at stake. In "**Peace Inside**", when the viewer looks inside the small hollow, he finds an *ad infinitum* reproduction of the blue of the sky. Is it, perhaps, a metaphor for a horizon of hope that the artist offers the world? In "**Money Ties**" –a basket woven with a fabric reminiscent of bank notes– the artists highlights the hypnotic power of money and its sharp ties when it is not rightly assimilated within human values.

In the sculpture garden outside the museum is the monumental work "**Trapped**", an ensemble of gigantic spheres all of which, from the biggest to the tiniest, appear to be trapped, caught in a net.

Rendered in a vibrant red and dominating the surrounding space, they seem to embrace one another. Do they perhaps evoke a group of human beings ready to slip off in search of their freedom?

In the ensemble of works on display, the intense and evocative power of music is an outstanding trait. Different types of music emphasize the emotional and symbolic tone of each piece. On entering the exhibition space, we listen to the New Age Music Group "UMAN" that immediately transports the viewer to his inner world. But Sylvia Riquezes grew up in a home filled with music. Her brother is the well-known Venezuelan composer Eduardo Marturet. He composed for the artist, when she was only six years old, the piece of music for piano "Mi Marioneta tiene tres Caras"/"My Marionette has three faces", a piece with a dynamic tempo and a tone of color, gaiety and melancholy that accompanies the work titled "Twister". In "Peace Inside", Eduardo Marturet's musical piece "Canto LLano" envelops the space of the Totem and the elements that allude to war, thus contributing to enhance the feeling of desolation and sadness. In the piece "Hear the Chime of Life" the typical sound created by the movement of several red balls jumping, is enhanced by the song " Llanos de mi Tierra", arranged and performed by Hernan Gamboa a virtuoso cuatro (traditional Venezuelan four-strings music instrument) player.

Sylvia Riquezes is a consistent humanist, a fervent believer in the positive consolidation of society, convinced of the fact that a luminous fate is in store for humanity and that man's potentiality is immense. Yet her vision is not a naïve one. Riquezes is aware of the risks and the difficulties, the obstacles and the threats that hang over the human race. With a passionate drive coupled with a subtle and dense approach, she offers the spectator a space filled with metaphysical considerations, personal experiences, observations and reflections on humankind and society.

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Miami, February 15, 2003