



Arte Morfosis



**Ernesto García Peña**  
ISLAND LYRICS

# Ernesto García Peña

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*August - October 2015*

*ArteMorfosis - Galería de Arte Cubano*

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On cover, fragment of *Móntate y...*  
(Mount and..., displayed on page 19)

## The Poetry of Dreams



DOLORES DENARO  
Art Historian and Curator

Ernesto García Peña (Matanzas, Cuba, 1949) belongs to the first post-revolutionary generation of Cuban artists. The long list of his exhibitions reflects the fact that he is recognized in Cuba as one of the best known and respected artists of his country. 3

Upon completing his studies at the Academy in Havana, he remained as a professor and for many years influenced the generations that followed.

The motifs of his paintings – as evidenced by the title of the exhibition and of the present catalogue – resemble lyrical poetry. Each work is a poem marked by the lyricism and the visual language of dreams, featuring imagination and intuition at its core. Visually, the works are marked by an aesthetic of delicacy and oscillate between the surreal and the abstract. García Peña uses acrylic paint like watercolor and, by aqueous application of the acrylic on the surface with paint brushes and flat brushes, obtains a transparency that is full of light.

The different elements are presented on the canvas as a breeze or distant memory. The paintings nourish from this delicate and yet radiant coloring – mainly in shades of blue, gray or red – from the empty spaces that reveal the beige background, as well as from the overlap of the layers that are often complemented with drawings from above or below. García Peña is “an artist of atmospheres of subtle transparencies.”, which are the result of “a long road of searches and explorations”.<sup>1</sup>

### SEARCH FOR BEAUTY AND HARMONY

The artist focuses on transmitting his emotions and fantasies around hedonistic topics. At the core is the ethical principle of the search of sensual pleasure and enjoyment. His work is an obsessive search of beauty and harmony, however he discloses very little about the content of his creations. He leaves the interpretation of his motifs to the viewers. The titles of the paintings provide a clue towards a possible reading of the artist’s intent since García Peña names his work after completion.

*Cuando todo comienza* (When Everything Begins, page 15) shows two hills that represent the oversized breasts of a woman. On one of them lies a naked masculine figure in profile, with eyes closed. He seems

to be crawling towards the nipple on his thorax, devotedly inhaling the oncoming fragrance. The stylized igniting spark emerging from one of the nipples recalls the first hours of human life, when the female breast develops from a sensual feminine organ into the first source of nourishment for every human being.

In general, the enigmatic female nude is present in all of García Peña's works. In *El ritual de...* (The Ritual of..., page 33), the sensual body of a naked woman seems to be floating between the sky, the water, and the landscape. Only upon a second look it becomes apparent that there is another, smaller erotic female figure in opposite direction within the first. In *Amaneceres* (Daybreaks, page 32) with a similar motif, an androgynous figure lies in ecstasy between the breasts, while above float two other bodies, intertwined.

#### 4 IDYLLIC SCENES

Overlapping bodies of different dimensions are a typical feature of García Peña's works. Similarly, erotic scenes are in all his creations – some with stylized feminine nudes and others with couples floating freely on the image surface. The fragility of love is expressed in accordance with the subtly indulgent application of color. Images of "beautiful" dreams are also always idylls, i.e., harmoniously clarified motifs that influence the spectator in a nice and peaceful way. The idylls, in turn, are illusions threatened at the same time by disillusion.

The bull and (more often) the horse, serve the artist as allegories of passion, movement, and virility. While in European iconography the symbolism of the horse depends essentially upon its color – white meaning bearer of light and black, death and ruin – the Cuban artist is much more interested in the strength and energy that are inherent to this animal. In *Móntate y...* (Mount and..., page 19) a naked woman is levitating with her arms extended backwards within a huge horse head. She is sitting on the shoulders of an equally naked man, who holds her around her legs.



5 She obviously enjoys the state of unrestrained freedom, as if she was sitting with windswept hair on the bow of a vessel gliding over the sea. On the nape of the horse lies another couple, one person on top of the other, while from the torso an androgynous figure with wings rises toward them.

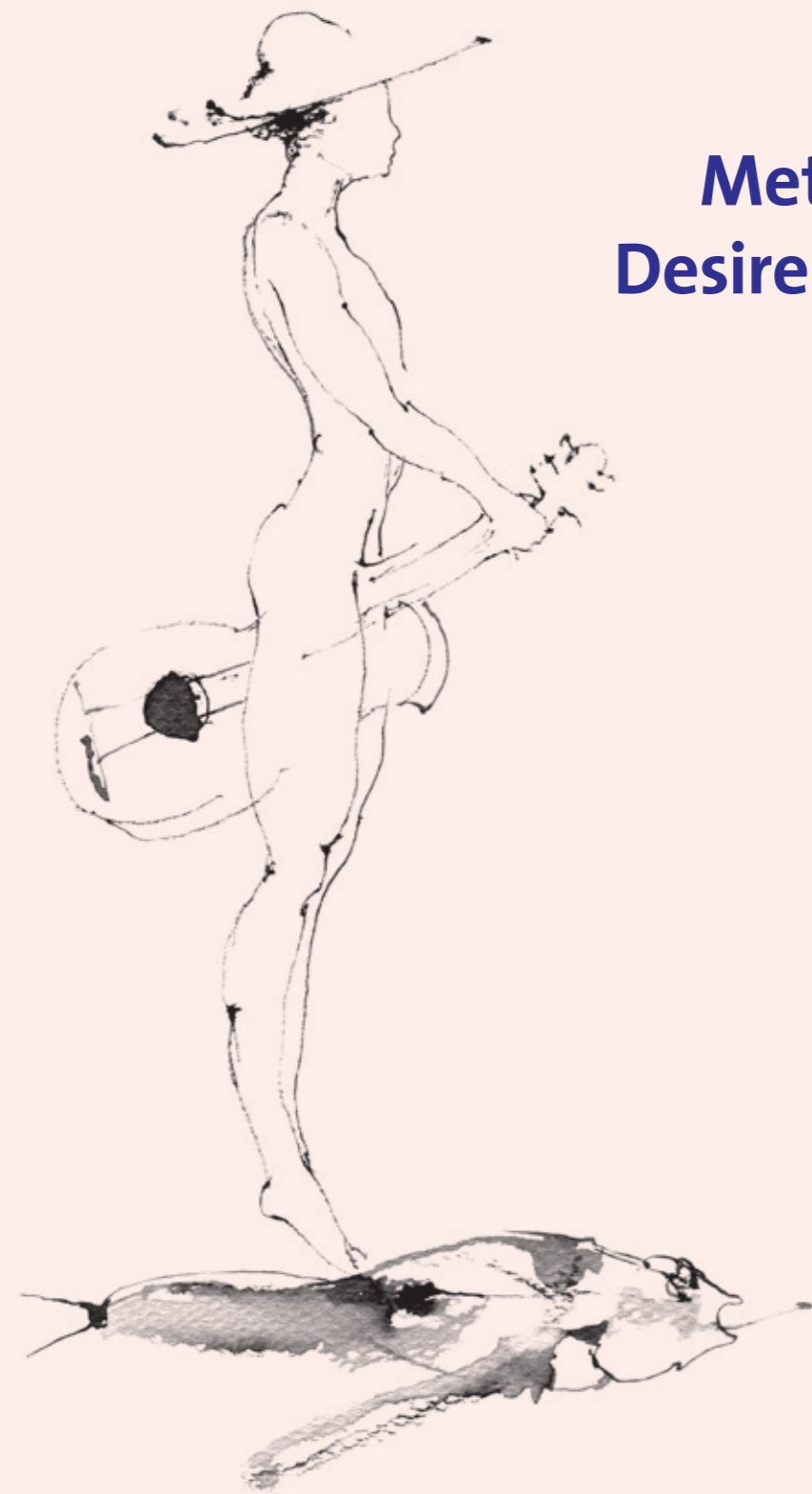
*El último canto de la bestia* (The Last Song of the Beast, page 23) shows a stylized feminine figure playing the violin within the body of a bull. If one understands the bull as masculine, one might be tempted to recall the story of creation in the Holy Scriptures, in which Eve – depending on the translation – was created from a bone (a rib) of Adam.

#### ISLAND LYRICS

Generally, Ernesto García Peña works in parallel on several paintings, so that the temporal and visual distance with a painting motif may mature in the artist's conception. Usually, when he stands before the blank canvas, he already has concrete concepts of what he is going to paint. Later he lets himself be carried away in the process by his intuitions. He attempts not to follow predefined processes or procedures in order not to bind or restrict himself. However, he sometimes uses ideas he had before, or resorts to one he had already drawn or sketched at an earlier occasion. The time he takes to complete a painting – which he frequently produces as part of a series – varies according to its development. And, analogous to poetry, short rhymes or longer poems arise, all created in the Caribbean island.

1 According to Cuban art critic Virginia Alberdi. See text on the invitation card to the present exhibition of García Peña in Arte-Morfosis Gallery.

2 See encyclopedia of the iconography: [www.beyars.com/kunstlexikon/lexikon\\_8834.html](http://www.beyars.com/kunstlexikon/lexikon_8834.html)



## Metaphors of Desire and Feast

MANUEL LÓPEZ OLIVA  
*Visual Artist and Art Critic*

Cuba has always been a source of pictorial wealth. Cuban painting is a result of numerous personalities who have expressed the relationship to nature, to social life, to culture and the most diverse poetic, erotic and dream symbols. Therefore, its history presents craftsmen of many kinds in whom perception and intuition, the dialogue between the view of the environment and the weight of traditions, the critical approach and the invention of languages are the bases for the distinctive creative qualities of each signature and mode of expression. Drama and songs, the passionate voice and the characteristic denoting special sensibility, the urge to construct personal visions and the trend to tell through the line, color, material, design or sum of procedures – often function as distinguishing properties of such professionals of the imagination. 7

The case of García Peña is that of the drawer/painter whose expressive technique consists of four basic elements: fluid and precise drawing, the spatial relationship between images, shades of color resulting from a variable emotional state, and that lyrical hedonism that turns his figures into metaphors of desire and celebrations. His work has always been like that, regardless of the inevitable periods of relative changes he has undergone as well as the variable circumstances in which it has developed. The encounter with the style of Cuban Servando Cabrera Moreno (who was not his teacher but indirectly became the favorite inspiration of his exploration of drawing and painting when he was young) was a revelation of spirit and form that was to become the ruling esthetic principle of a style that likewise nourished from his fellow countryman Carlos Enríquez as well as Klimt, Matisse and Chagall. Refinement in the brush-stroke, almost a dance of the hand that suggests and opens on the background the composition of figures, transparencies that tint the canvas or cardboard like a vanishing texture, strong gestures counterbalanced with delicate brushstrokes, visual motifs and expression of feelings have been constantly articulated in an artistic exercise that somehow resembles the imaginative work of the Pre-Raphaelists, Les Nabis and Art Nouveau.

García Peña's professional career began in the generation that burst forth toward the end of the first decade of the cultural process founded by the Cuban Revolution. Those artists were mainly trained at the National School of Art of Cubanacán during the fabulous 1960s. From the start they considered themselves indebted to the country's modern painting tradition and at the same time with the mission of projecting themselves with content and motifs that portrayed the best values of their adventurous and idealistic community at the time. Those of us who knew

him in the midst of his learning period recall that his sketches of ballet students and notes on the surrounding natural environment were normal extensions of the classes, and showed a tendency toward the “naturalistic” expressive gift that had become organic. With all those elements – the group experiences of the national epic, an intimate grasp of everything that interested him, as well as the painting references he chose – he was able to create an adequate stylistic choice to evoke his commitment to historical themes, personal memory, the rhythms of the feminine anatomy and certain morphologies of beautiful plants.

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A participant of what professor Teresita Crego called “the promotion of 1970” (because they were painters and printers basically from outside Havana who graduated from art school that year), García Peña brought with him insights typical of semi-rural areas, a way of thinking dependent upon the so-called “awareness of the simple man” as well as a marked tendency to reflect the beautiful side of life. That has been the reason sustaining the various series in painting, lithography, drawing and applied arts he has created, interwoven with the objectification of his limpid craft, his optimistic outlook and his characteristically marked sensuality.

It should be mentioned that in García Peña’s artistic production there have been and simultaneously appear key figures of his discourse: horses with riders, representation of naked men and women, wings and creatures of the fauna, subtle acts of carnal love and physiognomies in flames integrated into the forest. In everything he has made there are live connections between nature and metaphor, eye revelation and poetry, linear morphology and crystal-clear atmosphere. Always based on an agile and seductive drawing that he completes with color and spatial movements, Ernesto has succeeded in creating a kind of “endless symphony” with which he constantly summons us to enjoy a part that he adds to it, an exposition that highlights one of the angles of his “quasi-ornamental” vocabulary and that musicality of the line that he shows and dilutes on the canvas or cardboard. His are pleasing works that coincide

with the Apollonian dimension of art, exhibit synesthetic aspects and communicate with us through pure sensibility. Neither can we ignore in this artist the possibility of interpreting his images on the basis of the Freudian theory of the repressed and artistically compensated libido, because there is enough of it in those female bodies in ecstasy and attenuated lust, in that constant plastic interplay between chromatic mass and light, in what he shows and at the same time hides inside clear and occasionally dense surfaces.

For Ernesto, drawing and painting imply an act of affirmation and at the same time of surrender. Availing himself of an essentially illustrative method where the description is replaced by symbols and body gestures are turned into signals, he has succeeded in establishing an uninterrupted panorama of heroic references (19<sup>th</sup> century independence fighters in struggle against the Spanish colonialism, who act as incarnation of the patriotism of Cubans of all ages) and erotic (feminine and masculine nudes, alone or in couples that refer us to the sphere of physical and emotional satisfaction), where the two semantic facets become evident as sides of the same coin - of the art he has created.

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When his creation in the visual arts is comprehensively appreciated, it is obvious that it has no other purpose but to convey a joy of life, the impressions unleashed by the realistic landscape, the diverse phenomena contained in nature and transmitted in the form of unusual sensations; the different levels of sexual pleasure crystalized as icons of a ritual and emblematic of beauty, as well as the social and psychological balance of daily life. It has been a “job well done” – as Spanish critic Eugenio D’Ors would have said – in which reality caused no injury, just song and hope. Nevertheless, the door series he made for his project exhibited in the fortress of La Cabaña in the “Free Zone” of the 12<sup>th</sup> Biennial of Havana – despite the attractive graph variations and textures in symbolical colors – already reveals to us a García Peña also beaten by the conflicts and nightmares derived from the life circumstances, which are also identified by their deeply sensitive expression.



## A Vibrant Style of Dazzling Painting Motifs



ANTONIO FERNÁNDEZ SEOANE  
Art Specialist

Covering a creative period of approximately seven years of his powerful painting production, Ernesto García Peña now presents, in Zurich, a well-conceived selection of his artistic talent from his recent work to the present, in which voluptuous body forms are connected in a vibrant, unquestionably erotic style bursting with love. His style extends to zones of esthetic interest never before explored, such as the animal element of the horses in *Poderosos* (Powerful, page 16) and in the bullfighting magnificently portrayed in *El último canto de la bestia* (The Last Song of the Beast, page 23), or in music, present in *Después de la siesta* (After the Siesta, page 21) disguised precisely as bullfighting dreams...

Nineteen pieces in very diverse two dimensional formats are gathered together in *Island Lyrics*, the perfect title for an exhibition in the ArteMorfosis Gallery of Cuban art. The pieces contain the most representative characteristics of this great artist of color: blues, oranges and pinks, soft but with enough visual impact to make us shudder. And the apparent white, which totally covers the painting surfaces, in some of them as almost imperceptible element of subtleties denounced by the reality in nuanced themes that could likewise be ideal surfaces to discover his energetic and well-controlled drawing. Or the dazzling black (not value, but true color) that makes the figures fuse in daring abstract works *Semilla* (The Seed, page 24) and *Tanteando el cielo* (Testing Heaven, page 25). Likewise, two pieces of his painting production this year, heirs of this distinctive esthetic of smooth transparency that allows the union of bodies, are *Devenir* (Becoming, page 12) and *Enredos* (Entanglements, page 13) with a range of colors of strong symbolic meaning.

Splendid iconography is presented to us as intimate and unique artistic confession. Here are the passions of Ernesto García Peña - his longings and pain captured in that, not in the least complacent, "lyricism" that denotes and connotes in significant representations, to take us to the plane of his inalienable identity. An identity that, also universal, certainly belongs to this other side of the world, to the islands bathed by seas whose reflections adopt the most astonishing shades to become resolutely Caribbean, Cuban. Those islands where the plentiful love of its inhabitants reigns - the love that has been so well captured by the creative genius of García Peña.

Havana, Sunday, June 21, 2015



*Devenir (Becoming)*  
2015, acrylic / canvas  
60 x 63 cm



*Enredos (Entanglements)*  
2015, acrylic / canvas  
100 x 80 cm





*Renacer (Rebirth)*  
2010, acrylic / canvas  
102 x 145.5 cm



*Cuando todo comienza (When Everything Begins)*  
2010, acrylic / canvas  
75 x 100 cm



*Poderosos (Powerful)*  
2010, acrylic / canvas  
75 x 140 cm

*Móntate y...* (Mount and...)  
2011, acrylic / canvas  
72 x 65 cm





*Poderosa (Powerful)*  
2013, acrylic / canvas  
132 x 82.5 cm



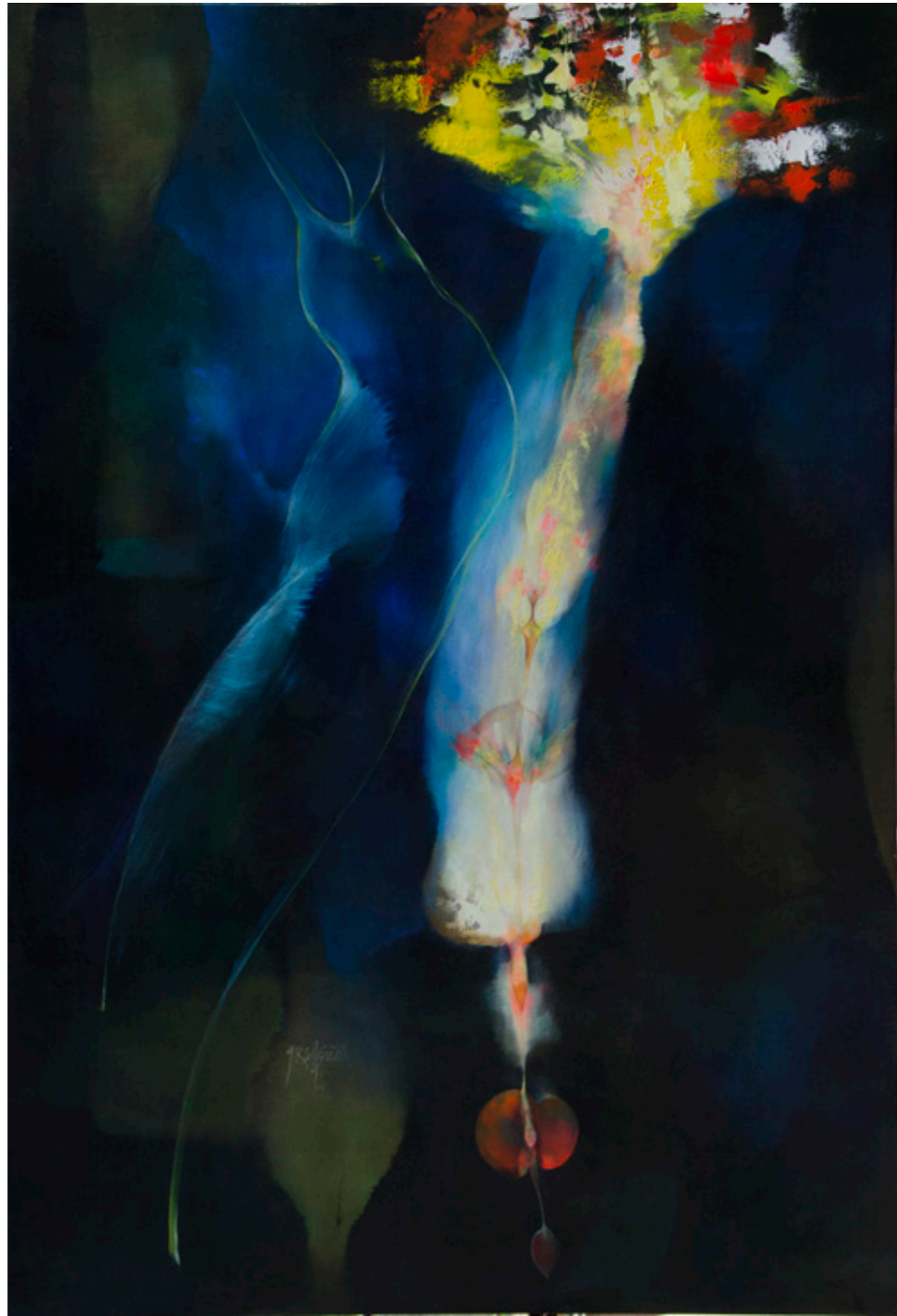
*Después de la siesta (After the Siesta)*  
2014, acrylic / canvas  
158.3 x 100 cm



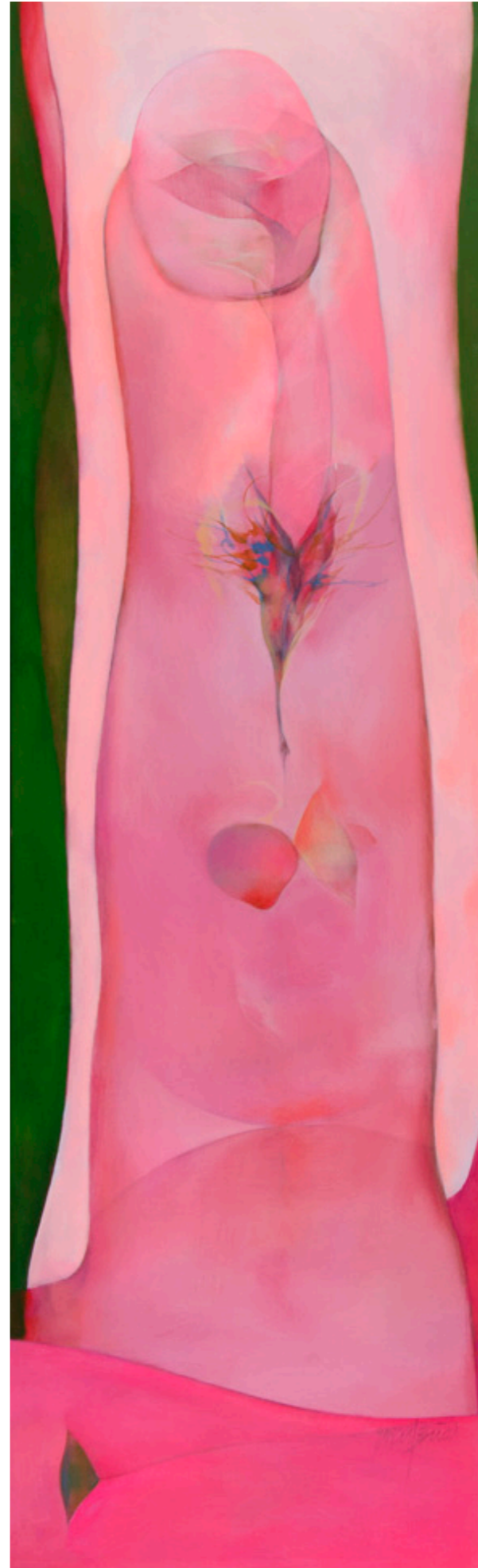
*Embrujo (The Spell)*  
2010, acrylic / canvas  
80 x 100 cm



*El último canto de la bestia (The Last Song of the Beast)*  
2014, acrylic / canvas  
99 x 118 cm



*Semilla (The Seed)*  
2008, acrylic / canvas  
195 x 130 cm



*Tanteando el cielo (Testing Heaven)*  
2013, acrylic / canvas  
169.5 x 45 cm



*Conmigo siempre* (Always With Me)  
2014, acrylic / canvas  
70.3 x 60.2 cm



*Evidencias* (Proof)  
2013, acrylic / canvas  
100 x 80 cm



*Las flores provocan* ( The Flowers Tempt)  
2012, acrylic / canvas  
57 x 87 cm

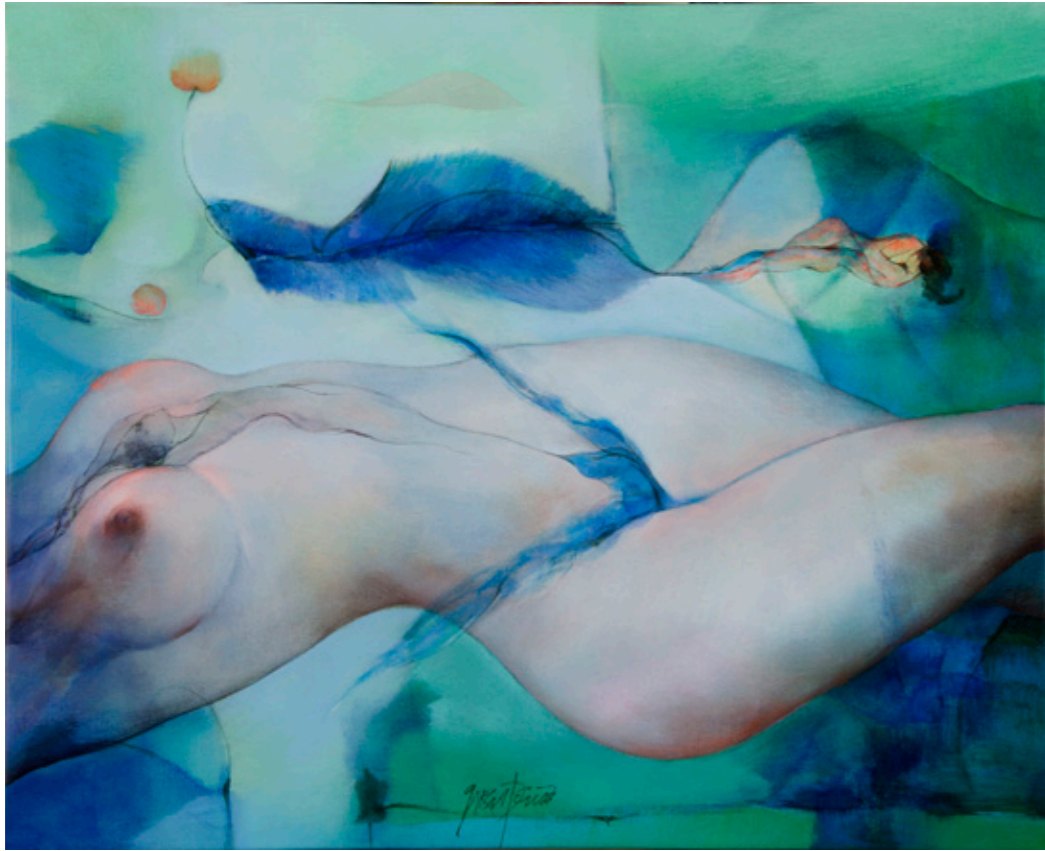


*Destinos* (Destinies)  
2013, acrylic / canvas  
51 x 78 cm

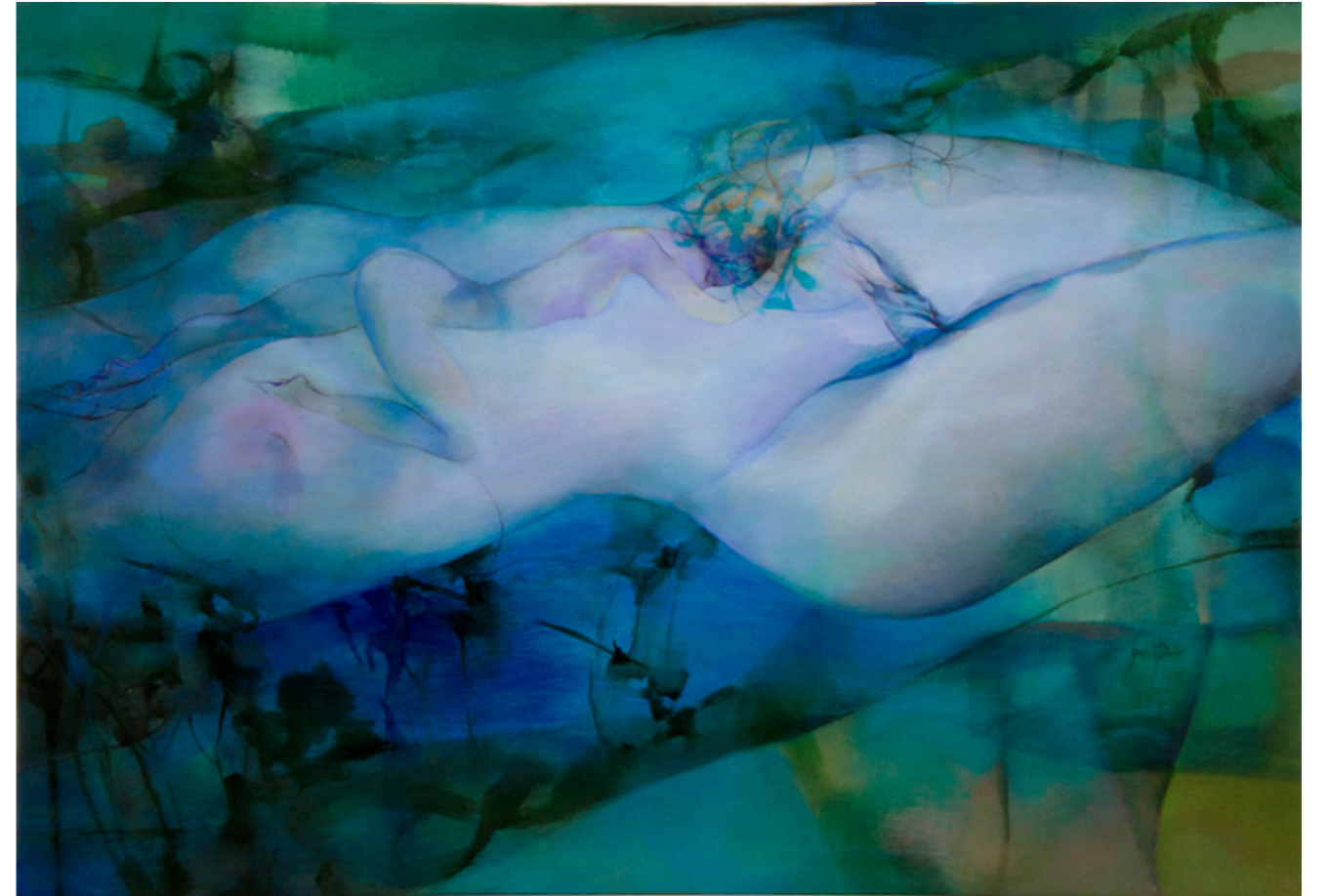




*Praxis (Practice)*  
2012, acrylic / canvas  
165 x 65 cm



*Amaneceres (Daybreaks)*  
2011, acrylic / canvas  
52 x 64 cm



*El ritual de... (The Ritual of...)*  
2012, acrylic / canvas  
70 x 100 cm

## ERNESTO GARCÍA PEÑA

Matanzas, March 6, 1949

He graduated from the National School for Art Instructors in 1965, and from the National School of Art (ENA) in 1970, specializing in painting. In 1987 he graduated from the Higher Institute of Art (ISA), specializing in engraving. He has been a professor of drawing at the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana, and of drawing, engraving and painting at the National School of Art of Cubanacán, where he was also head of the department in these specialties. He has been a consultant for study programs and curriculums of drawing, and has collaborated with various book publishing houses throughout his career. He is a member of the Experimental Graphics Workshop of Havana, of the International Association of Plastic Artists of UNESCO (AIAP) and of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC).

### SOLO SHOWS

- 2015** *De par en par* (Two by Two). Collateral to the Zona Franca project, 12<sup>th</sup> Havana Biennial, Cuba.
- 2014** *Convivencia* (Coexistence). Customhouse Gallery, Barranquilla, Colombia.  
*El alma desnuda* (The Naked Soul). Rubén Martínez Villena Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 2012-2013** *Haciendo caminos* (Finding Ways). Traveling exhibition to Cuban provinces.
- 2011** *De una a otra*. Plaza de la Patria. Bayamo, Granma, Cuba.  
*Transposiciones* (Transpositions). Arte y Sol Gallery, Varadero, Cuba.  
*Abracadabra*. New Millennium Gallery, Beijing, China.  
*García Peña - Paintings*. Brande Arts Oy, Helsinki, Finland.  
*Traslúcidos deseos* (Translucid Desires). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 2010** *Arte cubano* (Cuban Art), Brande Arts OY Gallery. Helsinki, Finland.
- 2009** *Germinar* (Germination). Gallery of the University of Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico.  
*Suerte de dos* (The Luck of Two). Bern, Switzerland.  
*Buen andar* (Good Step). Alma Mater Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic.  
*Nada es pequeño* (Nothing is Small). Miramar Trade Center, Havana, Cuba.
- 2008** *Natura* (Nature). Kunstkanzlei Gallery, Vienna, Austria.  
*Ceremonial* (Ceremony). Ambos Mundos Hotel, Havana, Cuba.  
*Horizontes para jugar* (Horizons to Play). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 2007** *Caminar con amor* (Walking with Love). Arte, Sol y Mar Gallery, Varadero, Cuba.  
*Contraposiciones* (Contrasts). El Ágora Cultural Center, Xalapa, Mexico.
- 2006** *Paintings of Ernesto García Peña*. Artesol Gallery, Ottawa, Canada.  
*Caminar con amor* (Walking with Love). Jovellanos Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.
- 2005** *Entreluces* (Gleams), Hotel Nacional de Cuba, Havana, Cuba.  
*Entreluces* (Gleams), Galiano Gallery, Havana, Cuba.  
*Sin imposibles* (Without Impossibilities). Recoleta Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
*Te doy... y pinto* (I Give to You... and Paint). Provincial Gallery of Plastic Arts, Bayamo, Gramma, Cuba.
- 2004** *Dentro de ti* (Inside You). Retrospective. Provincial Art Gallery of Matanzas, Cuba.  
*Dentro de ti* (Inside You). ETECSA Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.  
*García Peña - Paintings*. Fernando Pessoa Gallery, Coral Gables, Miami, USA.  
*Saudades*. FP Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal.  
*Ni más ni menos* (No More, No Less). Pequeño Espacio Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 2003** *Secretos del tiempo* (Secrets of Time). Museum of the City of Havana, Cuba.  
*Complementarios* (Complements). Museum of the Americas, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2001** *García Peña*. Retrospective. Colón Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.  
*Sueños salvados II* (Rescued Dreams II). Meliá Varadero Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.  
*Sueños salvados* (Rescued Dreams). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 2000** *Pintura cubana* (Cuban Painting). L'Auberge du Cheval, Staach, Switzerland.  
*Pintura cubana* (Cuban Painting). Gallery of the Latin America Mansion, Monaco.
- 1999** *Confluencias* (Confluences). Gallery of Santa Inés Palace, Grenada, Spain.  
*Acercamientos II* (Approaches II). Meliá Varadero Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.  
*Acercamientos* (Approaches). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.

- 1998** *Paintings by García Peña*. Hotaru Gallery, Tokyo, Japan.  
*Paintings by García Peña*. Meguro Kumin Museum of Contemporary Art, Kumin, Tokyo, Japan.  
*Transparencias* (Transparencies). Anthological exhibition, José Martí Memorial, Havana, Cuba.  
*Carta de otoño* (Autumn Letter). Gallery of Hotel Inglaterra, Havana, Cuba.
- 1996** *Entre dos* (Between Two). Navit Enterprises Corp., Miami, USA.
- 1994** *Arborescencias* (Arboreal). Saira Gallery, Vigo, Spain.  
*Mi espacio* (My Space). City hall gallery, San Sebastián de los Reyes, Madrid, Spain.
- 1993** *Trampas* (Traps). Foro Cultural Gallery, Coyoacán, Mexico City, Mexico.
- 1992** *Rituales* (Rituals). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.  
*Amores* (Loves). Gallery of the Museum of Art of Costa Rica, Melic Salazar Theater, San José, Costa Rica.
- 1990** *Los motivos de Ernesto* (Ernesto's Reasons). Espacio Abierto Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 1988** *Crear naturalezas* (Create Natures). Provincial Art Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.
- 1987** *Amores* (Loves). Gallery of the Experimental Graphics Workshop, Havana, Cuba.  
*Propuestas* (Proposals). "L" Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 1986** *Pas de cheval*, Habana Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 1982** *Acuarelas, dibujos, grabados* (Watercolors, Drawings, Engravings). Exhibition hall of the National School of Art, Cubanacán, Havana, Cuba.
- 1977** *Monte adentro* (Deep in the Countryside). Pequeño Salón Gallery, National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.
- 1976** *A la carga* (Charge!). Habana Gallery, Havana, Cuba.

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2015** *AB + C*, second edition. Collateral to the 12<sup>th</sup> Havana Biennial. Taganana Hall, Hotel Nacional de Cuba. Havana.
- 2014** *V + X= ALBA*. ALBA Cultural House, Havana, Cuba.  
*Rodando se encuentran*. (Rolling, They Meet). Exhibition of the National Council for Plastic Arts of Cuba. Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Center, Shanghai, China.  
Habano Festival. Palace of Conventions of Havana, Cuba.
- 2013** *Flux Mail*. Kunstkanzlei.Gallery, Vienna, Austria.  
*Guest Artists in Italy*. La Rocca Sanvitale-Fontanellato, Parma, Italy.
- 2012** *Bola viva*. Customhouse Gallery, Barranquilla, Colombia.  
*Bola viva*. Zenú Museum, Montería, Colombia.  
*Bola viva*. Bolivarian Museum, Santa Marta, Colombia.  
*Bola viva*. Museum of Modern Art, Cartagena, Colombia.  
*AB + C*. Collateral to the 11<sup>th</sup> Havana Biennial, Cuba.  
*Este hombre es mi amigo* (This Man is My Friend). José Martí Memorial, Havana, Cuba.
- 2011** *Color Cuba* (Cuban Color). José Martí Memorial, Havana, Cuba.  
*Cuban Masters Art Showcase*. The Centurion Condominium, New York, USA.  
*Color Cuba* (Cuban Color). Vila Real de San Antonio, Portugal.  
*Pacto* (Pact). Roberto Diago Gallery, Matanzas, Cuba.  
*Un minuto de silencio* (One Minute of Silence). Gallery of Guayasamín House, Havana, Cuba.
- 2010** *Retratos de Mella* (Portraits of Mella). House of the Film Festival, Havana, Cuba.  
*Monstruos devoradores de energía* (Energy Devouring Monsters). Francia Station, Barcelona, Spain.  
*Monstruos devoradores de energía* (Energy Devouring Monsters), San Francisco Square, Seville, Spain.  
*Cuba pinta a Guayasamín* (Cuba Paints Guayasamín), Gallery of Guayasamín House, Havana, Cuba.
- 2009** *Cuba pinta a Guayasamín* (Cuba Paints Guayasamín). Chapel of Mankind, Quito, Ecuador.  
*Pura coincidencia* (Sheer Coincidence). 10<sup>th</sup> Havana Biennial, Expocuba, Havana, Cuba.  
*Retrátate con arte* (Portray Yourself with Art). 10<sup>th</sup> Havana Biennial, University of Havana, Cuba.
- 2008** *Esta noche baila aquí Alicia Alonso* (Alicia Alonso Dances Here Tonight). National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.
- 2007** *Luz de tu ausencia* (Light of Your Absence). Tribute to Celia Sanchez Manduley, Convent of Saint Francis of Assisi, Havana, Cuba.  
*Cuba, Art and Soul*. El Museo Cultural, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.

- Monstruos devoradores de energía* (Energy Devouring Monsters), Au Grand Palais, Paris, France.  
*Monstruos devoradores de energía* (Energy Devouring Monsters), Casa de las Américas, Madrid, Spain.
- 2006** *Cinco palmas* (Five Palm Trees). Tribute to the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of Commander Fidel Castro.  
*Manual de instrucciones. Proyecto refrigeradores* (Instruction Manual. Refrigerator Project), Havana, Cuba.
- 2005** *Exhibición de 30 grabados* (30 Engravings), Centro Cultural del Telégrafo, Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
*Exhibición de 30 grabados* (30 Engravings). General Archive of the Nation, Ministry of the Interior of Argentina, Buenos Aires.
- 2004** *Mirada interior de Alfredo Cannatelo* (Inner Gaze of Alfredo Cannatelo), Convent of Saint Francis of Assisi, Havana, Cuba.  
*Trece pintores cubanos de hoy* (Thirteen Cuban Artists of Today). Mediterránea Gallery, Palma de Mallorca, Spain.  
*Cuban Passion*. Wisma Kebudayaan SGM, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- 2003** *Arte soy entre las artes* (I Am Art among the Arts). Recoleta Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
*Colección de grabados donados por Cuba* (Collection of Engravings Donated by Cuba). National Museum of Engraving, Argentina.  
*31 artistas cubanos contemporáneos en Chile* (31 Contemporary Cuban Artists in Chile), BordeRio Art Gallery, Santiago de Chile.  
*Cuban cantos*. Prince Arthur Fine Arts Gallery, Toronto, Canada.  
*Cuban cantos*. Contemporary Art Gallery, Montreal, Canada.  
*Visiones plásticas: el arte del vitral* (Plastic Visions: the Art of Stained Glass Windows), National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.  
*Exposición de pintores cubanos* (Exhibition of Cuban Painters). Guayasamín Foundation, Quito, Ecuador.  
*Ora pro nobis*. Gallery of San Carlos Seminar, Havana, Cuba.  
*Yo sé de un pintor gigante* (I Know about a Giant Painter). José Martí Memorial, Havana, Cuba.
- 2002** *14 pintores cubanos* (14 Cuban Painters). FP Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal.  
*1ra Bienal de Arquitectura* (First Biennial of Architecture). White Hall, Convent of Saint Francis of Assisi, Havana, Cuba.  
*Homenaje a John Lennon* (Tribute to John Lennon). El reino de este mundo Gallery, José Martí National Library, Havana, Cuba.
- 2001** *1ra Bienal de Artes Plásticas: Salud Mental* (First Biennial of Plastic Arts: Mental Health). Salumes Gallery, Regla, Havana, Cuba.  
*Visiones* (Visions). Museum of the Americas, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2000** *Pinceles en punta* (Brushes in Points). Los Oficios Gallery, 17<sup>th</sup> International Ballet Festival of Havana, Cuba.  
*Primer Salón de Arte Erótico* (First Salon of Erotic Art). La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba.
- 1998** *1er Salón Iberoamericano de Acuarelas* (First Iberian American Salon of Watercolors), Mexican Cultural Institute, Washington, USA.  
*Arte BA'97 Catálogo Cuba* (BA'97 Art, Cuban Catalogue). Recoleta Cultural Center, Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
*2do Salón de Arte Cubano Contemporáneo* (Second Salon of Contemporary Cuban Art). National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.  
*Arte joven cubano* (Young Cuban Art). Museum of the Americas, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 1995-1996** *12 pintores cubanos, 12 cuentos peregrinos* (12 Cuban Painters, 12 Traveling Stories). Gallery of Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba; Museum of Fine Arts of Colombia; Gallery of the Institute of Culture of Panama.
- 1995** *Arte cubano contemporáneo* (Contemporary Cuban Art). Museum of Modern Art, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.  
*1er Salón de Arte Cubano Contemporáneo* (First Salon of Contemporary Cuban Art). National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.
- 1994** *Gráfica cubana* (Cuban Graphic Art). Carlos Olachea Gallery, La Paz, Baja California.
- 1993** *Ritos y paisajes del Caribe* (Rites and Landscapes of the Caribbean). Metropolitan Autonomous University (UNAM), Mexico
- 1992** *Color de Cuba Expo '92* (Cuban Color Expo '92). Seville, Spain.
- 1991** *Panorámica de la pintura cubana* (Overview of Cuban Painting). Siqueiros Poliforum, Mexico.
- 1989** *XV Országos Grafikai Biennale*. Miskolc, Hungary.  
*Arte contemporáneo cubano* (Contemporary Cuban Art), Westbeth Gallery, New York, USA.
- 1988** *3ra Bienal de La Habana* (Third Havana Biennial). Colonial Museum, Havana, Cuba.
- 1984-1985** *IX Exhibition of Original Drawings*. Rijeka, Yugoslavia.  
*1ra Bienal de La Habana* (First Havana Biennial). National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba.  
*Intergrafik*. Berlin, Germany.
- 1983** *International Biennial of Engraving*. Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.  
*UNEAC Salons*. Havana, Cuba (all since 1982).  
*Small Format Salons*. "L" Gallery, Havana, Cuba (all since 1984).  
*Salons of Art Professors*. Havana, Cuba.

## DISTINCTIONS

- 2007** Special Teaching Category of Consultant Professor. Higher Institute of Art, Havana, Cuba.
- 2001** Diploma for Artistic Merit. Higher Institute of Art, Havana, Cuba.
- 1996** Distinction for National Culture.
- 1994** Unique Mention in Drawing. Salón Abanico (Salon of Fans), Havana, Cuba.
- 1990** Majadahonda 1936, Distinction, UNEAC.
- 1985** Rubén Martínez Villena Order to the most relevant artistic work of the year.
- 1984** First Prize of the contest Mariana Grajales Square, Guantánamo, Cuba.
- 1976** First Mention in Painting, National Salon of Professors, Havana, Cuba.
- 1974** First Mention in Painting, National Salon of Professors, Havana, Cuba.
- 1973** Third Prize in Drawing. National Salon of Professors, Havana, Cuba.  
 Mention of Honor in Painting. UNEAC Salon, Havana, Cuba.

## COLLECTIONS

National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba; Latin America Memorial Museum of Art, Brasilia, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art, Miskolc, Hungary; Museum of Art of the Americas, Managua, Nicaragua; Institutions and private collectors in Cuba, Spain, USA, Canada, Panama, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, France, Russia and Japan.

## ARTEMORFOSIS - GALERÍA DE ARTE CUBANO

ArteMorfosis is a gallery for Cuban art in Zurich. Its aim is to make the work of contemporary Cuban artists accessible to an interested audience. ArteMorfosis initially focuses on well-established Cuban artists, with proven international track records, but who remain yet to be discovered in the German-speaking part of Europe.

The gallery is a piece of Cuba in Zurich; it irradiates Cuban warmth and transmits Cuba's carefree nature, joy of living and wealth of improvisation to the visitor. Strong coffee, a drink of rum, music, walls painted in light yellow, at times too many paintings hanging on the walls, and an added "mezzanine" create an atmosphere like the one you also find in Cuban private galleries. While it highlights distinctive Cuban characteristics, the Gallery finds ever-new paths of its own: ArteMorfosis is self-confidently different, and is aimed at like-minded visitors.

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The name "ArteMorfosis" and the butterfly in its logo symbolize the gallery owners' understanding of the creative process. The metamorphosis of a butterfly – from larva to cocoon to butterfly, to laying eggs and again to larva – is an eternal biological development cycle. A comparable cycle exists in art: an artist, inspired by his culture, his environment, experiences and intuitions, creates a work of art with paints and a canvas, presents it to the public, sells it and uses the proceeds for his next work. The gallery is dedicated to the part of the cycle in which art is presented and sold.

Participating in a cultural development cycle that still has no name, the gallery owners without further ado named this cycle and named their gallery, "ArteMorfosis".

The gallery considers itself as ambassador of Cuban art in Switzerland and a meeting place between art creators and collectors. Its first priority is to promote the lively, creative work of Cuban artists, since Cuba is (still) today a little-known art market. The country's transformation and opening provide vast opportunities for the discovery of - in Switzerland hitherto unknown - art treasures.

### THE GALLERY OWNERS

**Idalmys Burkhard - García Negrín** (1967) was born in Cuba. She grew up in a culturally interested family; her father was a founding member of the Cuban National Chorus and throughout her working life her mother was involved in different activities connected with the theater. Thus, performing artists were frequent house guests. As a nurse working at higher level art schools for many years, she was able to stay in touch with the artistic community. She lives in Switzerland since 2002.

**Johann Burkhard** (1961) is a Swiss Internet pioneer. As co-founder of the Swiss Internet comparison website, [www.comparis.ch](http://www.comparis.ch), he quickly embraced the potential of the new media and was one of the few who achieved commercial success. For the last 13 years he has operated a classifieds portal ([www.cubisima.com](http://www.cubisima.com)), which ranks amongst the most used websites in Cuba. Johann will contribute his experience of the digital media, new technologies and decision-making to ArteMorfosis. Idalmys and Johann have been married for 13 years and have a 10-year old son.

### THE GALLERY

**ArteMorfosis - Galería de Arte Cubano** Weinbergstrasse 15, 8001 Zürich  
+41 44 252 41 41 - [info@artemorfosis.com](mailto:info@artemorfosis.com) - [www.artemorfosis.com](http://www.artemorfosis.com)  
Exhibit hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

### THE AUTHORS

**Dolores Denaro**, born in 1971, read Modern Art History, Architectural History, and Monument Preservation as well as Religious Studies at the University of Bern. She holds an MA in Cultural Management from the University of Basel. Until 2001 she was freelance publicist and curator as well as research assistant at the Paul-Klee-Stiftung and later the Johannes-Itten-Stiftung at Kunstmuseum Bern. From 1999 until 2001 director and curator at Kunsthau Grenchen. From 2002 until the end of 2011 (ten years) director and curator at Kunsthau CentrePasquArt in Biel. From 2012 until 2013 external expert consultant for the Julius Bar Kunstsammlung (art collection). Since 2012, president of the Swiss national Kiefer Hablitzel Preis für bildende Kunst (fine arts award). Since 2013, freelance curator and publicist. Numerous exhibitions and publications with the focus on contemporary art as well as board member of various art foundations and jury member on several panels.

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**Manuel López Oliva** (Manzanillo, province of Granma, Cuba, 1947). He completed the highest level of study of Painting at the National School of Art in 1969. He has been a professor of Painting at the Provincial School of Art of Camagüey and at the National School of Art of Havana. Up to 2004 he taught as a member of the Visual Arts Faculty of the Higher Institute of Art of Cuba. He has been involved in the reanimation project of the historical center of Havana. His chronicles on that topic may be read in *Regulaciones Urbanísticas. La Habana Vieja. Centro Histórico. Primera Parte*. Colección ARCOS-Ediciones Boloña, 2009. He is a member of the National Council of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and has been president of the National Committee of the International Association of Visual Artists (AIAP). He has functioned as an art critic and theorist, has founded various cultural institutions in the country, and has been a juror in many salons, biennials and contests. He has delivered lectures and courses on art in cultural centers, museums and universities of Colombia, the United States, Sweden, France, Nicaragua, Brazil, Italy and the Dominican Republic.

**Antonio Fernández Seoane** (Havana, July 14, 1946) Bachelor in Art History by the University of Havana, professor at San Alejandro National Academy of Fine Arts and visual arts critic on CMBF (national music broadcasting station). Currently first vice president of the Association of Visual Artists of UNEAC (Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba) and president of its Theory and Critique Section. Member of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) and of the Executive Board of the AICA-Cuba Section. Art criticism has been published in numerous Cuban and international publications. Extensive curatorial experience in Cuban as well as international venues.

ERNESTO GARCÍA PEÑA. ISLAND LYRICS

The present catalogue is published on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name that will be presented from August 21 to October 2, 2015 at the Cuban Art Gallery ArteMorfosis, Zurich.

EDITOR:

ArteMorfosis - Galería de Arte Cubano. ArteMorfosis is a gallery of cubisima.com AG.

WORKS OF ART REPRODUCED:

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GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Pepe Menéndez, Laura Llopiz

PRINTING:

Selvi Artes Gráficas, Valencia, Spain

GENERAL COORDINATION:

Pilar Vázquez Sánchez

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ISBN 978-3-9524478-1-9

Ernesto García Peña and the ArteMorfosis Gallery thank all those who, with their support, have made this catalogue possible.



... There are three essential elements here: the first is the eroticism as part of reality, of the way we are. There is the voluptuousness of nature in the relationship of the archipelago with the sea, in the fury of the hurricane, and in the palm tree... Before explaining anything, feeling precedes knowledge – and in order to understand the feelings one has to know this artist – this artist who only continues to create through his window, regarding himself in his own mirror. There is no insincere emotion here; there is nothing – forgive me – that has not been lived intensely... The artist remains intact. The sources of his visions are the same, but only the artist has the privilege of doing what he is doing this afternoon - disrupting our previous idea of things and always giving us, through the prism of his eyes, something totally new..

Fragment of the words pronounced by Dr. Eusebio Leal Spengler, Historian of the City of Havana, at the inauguration of the exhibition *El alma desnuda* (The Naked Soul)



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