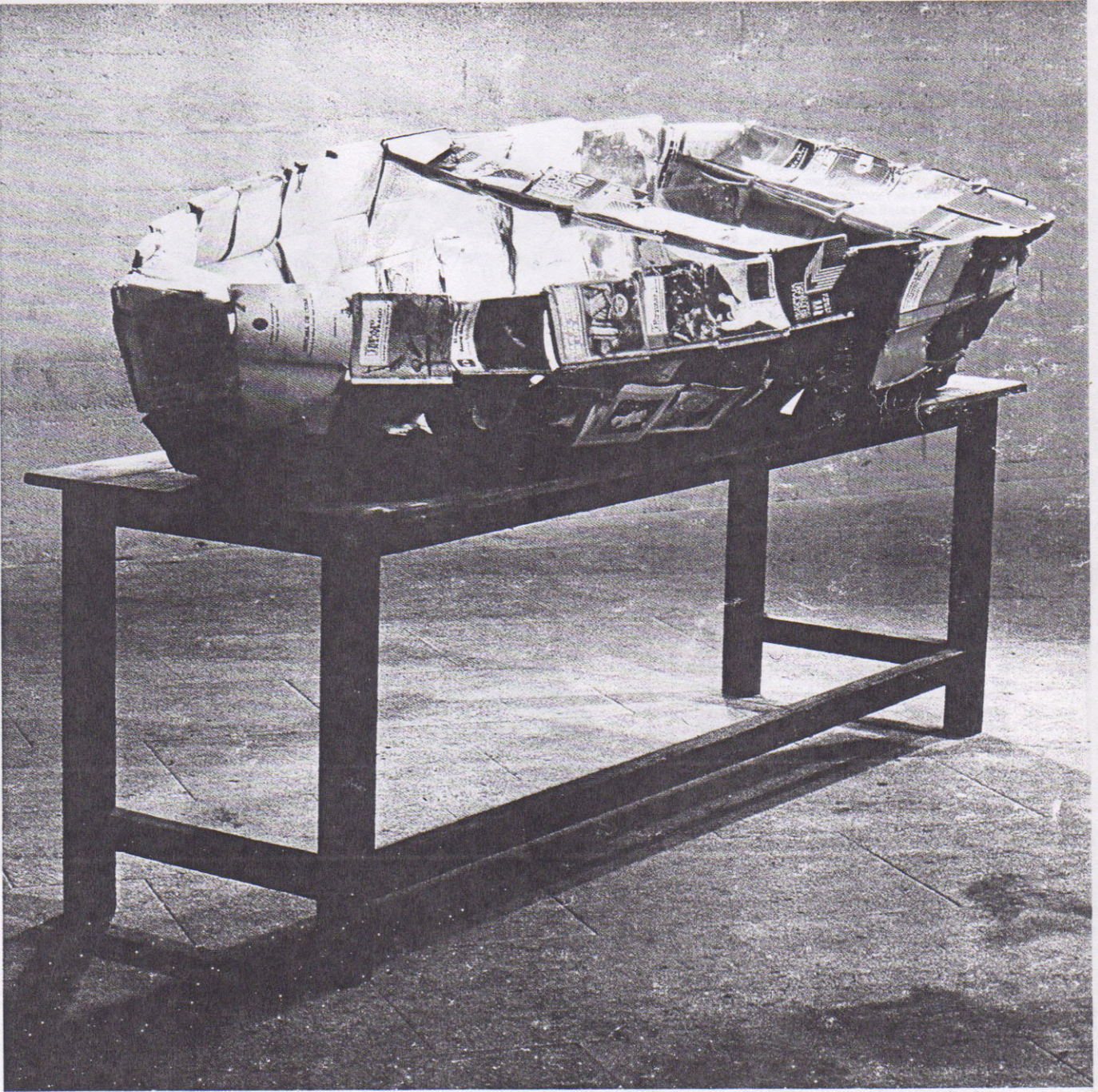


# Flash Art International

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USA & OTHERS \$7 - CANADA \$10 - GREAT BRITAIN £5 - ITALY L. 12.000 - GERMANY DM 15 - HOLLAND ƒ 18 - FRANCE FF 50 - BELGIUM BE 100 - SWITZERLAND SF 12 - AUSTRIA ÖS 100 - SPAIN Ptas 1000 - AUSTRALIA \$ 12 - SUPPLEMENTO N° 188 A FLASH ART N° 187 APRILE - MAGGIO 1996



Kcho (cover: Obras Escogidas, 1994) - Luc Tuymans - Pia Stadtbäumer  
Diller + Scofidio - Marcel Broodthaers - Francis Alÿs - Olafur Eliasson  
Sam Taylor Wood - Lyle Ashton Harris - Young Americans - A Spectre in Europe



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## STORYLAND

WALTER PHILLIPS, BANFF (CANADA)

Once upon a time in Banff there was an exhibition in two parts. "Storyland," curated by Catherine Crowston and Su Ditta, consists of five artists' photo and text installations, and five video works. Narrative as an interweaving of the individual and communal, the personal and political, is the premise under which these works are collected.

Stories are told from wide ranging points of view, from the overbearingly personal to the practical absence of the artist's own voice. Linda Steele's video *Birthday Suit — With Scars and Defects* walks the viewer with painful proximity through an inventory of scars on the artist's body. Each scar's history is spoken with solemn objectivity while the unmoving camera shows the defect in question as the artist rubs it and rubs it and rubs it...

At the opposite extreme lies Arnait Ikkajurtigiit's video

*Ataguttaaluk Starvation*. Rose Okumluk, an Igoalik elder, recounts one woman's gruesome yet heroic struggle against starvation. The camera is fixed on the speaker and the artists' voice is seldom heard. A traditional documentary, the piece records and oral history with little interpretation apart from subtitles. The story itself is riveting.

Other works lie between those poles of the personal and the anthropological, and it is here that "the stories(...)" reveal how a sense of place contributes to the creation of shared memories, of communities and of the intersections between personal experience and larger social structures."

Carrie Mae Weems' *Sea Island Series* marries texts heavily laden with poetic folklore and beautiful black and white photos from the Gullah Islands, where slavery was long in existence and isolation preserved

## GROUP SHOWS



Marlene Creates, *Places of Presence: Newfoundland Kin's Ancestral Land, 1989-91*. Photo Don Lee.

much African culture. Her view is not that of the objective anthropologist, but of a (black) artist using narrative to arrive at that place that is at once cultural, geographical, political and personal.

In *Where My Grandmother*

*Was Born*, Marlene Creates uses photos, text and found objects to trace a family history of land ownership in rural Newfoundland. Stories and hand-drawn maps are collected from her relatives, accompanied by an object from the site and Creates' pictures of the land. Landscape becomes personalized and voices become historical.

Language itself is at once social and individual. Those works arising from purely personal experience do not resonate — there is no common ground of understanding between the viewer/listener and the artist/storyteller. For a story to be told, there must be some shared vocabulary. More engaging are those works in which the artists' stories weave both personal and social experience. It is here one hears voices of horror and heroics, humor and poignancy, here that stories are told.

Maja Swannie

## INTERVENCIONES EN EL ESPACIO

MUSEO DE BELLAS ARTES, CARACAS (VENEZUELA)

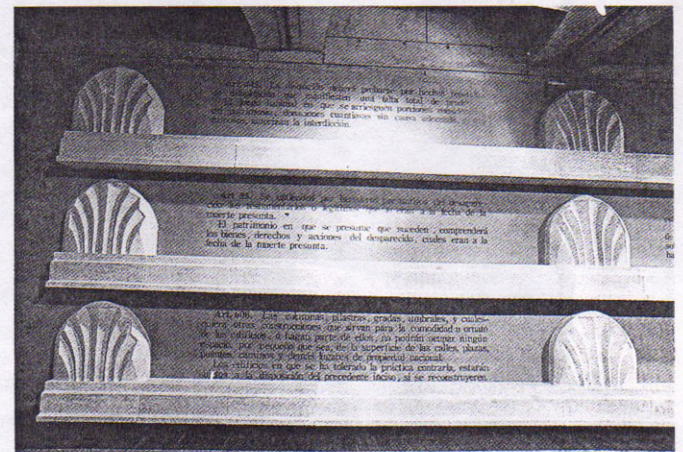
With the participation of well-known international artists, the oldest museum in the country is, for the first time, addressing issues such as what the institution claims to be and represent.

"Intervenciones en el espacio" invites the viewers to make their way through the whole museum by weaving between the 1930s neoclassical National Art Gallery and its more recent counterpart, the 70s modern Museo de Bellas Artes, which was designed by the pioneering Venezuelan architect Carlos Raul Villanueva.

What stands out in "Intervenciones" are the diversity of interpretations. One tactic is to build the work into the architecture in order to show the past and present of the institution. The corporative mutations of Dan Graham, who installed pavillions in the garden, serve to crystallize the fractures of social displacement of a country that has contradictions built into its very foundation. Terry Smith produces clones: vestiges of the old building that dig into the walls of the new. Joseph Kosuth refers to

quotations from the *Voyage to the Equinoctial Regions* by German baron Alexander Von Humboldt, who had recourse to Venezuela in the 19th century. Installed in the walls of the ramps that provide access to the various galleries, Kosuth's installation responds to the vertical arrangement of the museum as well as to the mountainous ascents described by Humboldt. Ernst Caramelle falsifies the history of the building with a mural concealed behind a ramp.

The inclusion of three Latin American artists proves to be one of the most pertinent factors of the show. Víctor Lucena's contribution is constructed to comply with architect Villanueva's system of proportions (that also of the Roman Pantheon and the Temple of Solomon). Luis Camnitzer establishes his work in three times and spaces: one "past interior," a representation of a work previously presented in the old building; another "present intermediate," involving a document on social relations; and one "permanent external," employing



Gonzalo Díaz, *El Estado de Derecho*.

a phrase by Simon Rodriguez, the maestro of Bolivar. These "stop-offs" are figuratively connected by a flyer containing another quotation from Rodriguez: "Dealing with things is the first step in education. Dealing with those who have them, the second." Gonzalo Díaz reproduces two sections from the cornice of the neoclassical building. The cornices, as elements symbolic of institutional investment, are traversed by texts from the 19th century constitution of Chile,

drawn up by Andres Bello, a Venezuelan intellectual and driving force behind the country's emancipation from America.

Curator María Elena Ramos's research, the efforts made by the museum itself, a contamination of absolute criteria, and the absence of division according to region are the factors which make this a landmark exhibition for the Museo.

Jesús Fuenmayor

(Translated from Spanish by Christopher Martin).