

Carlos Garaicoa is known for his explorations of social and political issues in the context of urban architecture and the built environment. Inspired by his native Havana, Garaicoa adopts the city as a laboratory and metaphor for human existence, intervening on its landscape to offer searing and insightful commentary on issues such as architecture's ability to alter the course of history, the failure of modernism as a catalyst for social change, human rights, and the frustration and decay of 20th century utopias.

Working across artistic media, Garaicoa takes a multidisciplinary approach that defies categorization. In several projects, his ideas evolve over series of black and white photographs altered and amended in various ways. *Untitled (Sentences) [Sin título (frases)]*, 2009, documents the artist's perambulations through Havana's formerly bustling downtown commercial center. Departing from the fanciful names emblazoned on now deteriorated or abandoned storefronts, he composes poetic responses—part lamentation, part political critique—in pins and needles directly on the photographs.

In other works, Garaicoa engages architecture and the built environment through sculpture and installation. *The Crown Jewels (Las joyas de la corona)*, 2009, consists of eight cast silver models of international sites of military authority, surveillance and repression, including Cuba's Villa Marista, the East German Stasi, Guantánamo Naval Base, the Pentagon, and the KGB. Intricate and intimately sized, they are displayed separately in glass vitrines. *Bend City*, 2009, one of the artist's exquisite cut paper installations, depicts an entire city composed of imaginary forms.

Driven by a belief in the artist's moral obligation towards society, Garaicoa creates new artistic vocabularies in order to discuss social and political issues that resonate in both local and global contexts.

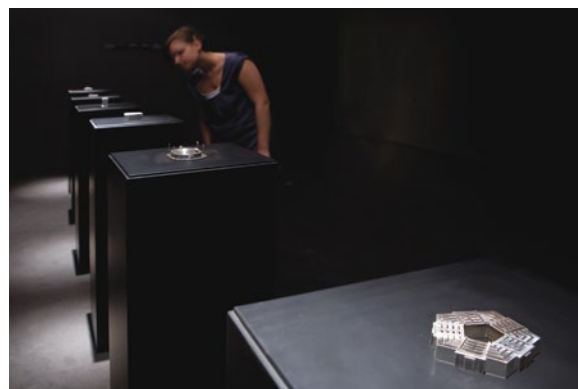
Carlos Garaicoa (b. 1967, Havana, Cuba) lives and works in Madrid, Spain, and Havana, where he studied thermodynamics at the Instituto Hermanos Gómez and visual art at the Instituto Superior de Arte. Since 1991, Garaicoa has exhibited extensively at international venues including the 53rd Venice Biennale and Documenta 11. His works belong to public and private collections including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Tate Modern (London), Museum of Modern Art (New York), and El Museo Nacional de Arte Centro de Arte Reina Sofia (Madrid).

1. *The Crown Jewels*, 2009

Casting miniature replicas in silver, Garaicoa transforms sites of state-sponsored surveillance and repression into precious objects. From KGB headquarters in Moscow to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, the delicate replicas invite viewers to consider the role architecture plays in constructing state power and civic memory.

2. *For Life...*, 2008

In Garaicoa's drawing, a billboard frame atop an abandoned building emblazoned with the slogan "For Life with Fidel!" extends into a massive trellis overtaken by irrepressible vines.



3. *Saving Time*, 2009

Garaicoa's gesture of setting a modernist clock to run backwards invites viewers to imagine the possibilities of revisiting and revising social and political events.

4. *Theory and Practice in the 18th Brumaire of K. Marx*, 2009

Through his invocation of Karl Marx's landmark text, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Garaicoa's sculpture invites viewers to consider critically the history of revolutionary politics in Cuba. How has the shape of lived experience on the island measured up against political rhetoric?



5. *From the Series To Transform the Political Word into Facts, Finally II*, 2009

Carving lines into photographs mounted on metal and stucco, Garaicoa engraves an imagined architecture into Havana's existing landscape—at times suggesting a socialist utopia more fully realized, at others performing an absurdist intervention into a forsaken landscape.

6. *Untitled (Sentences)*, 2009

Writing with thread and pins atop black-and-white photographs, Garaicoa crafts "street haikus" in response to storefront signs that once trumpeted Havana's commercial vitality.

7. *The Word Transformed, Part 1*, 2009

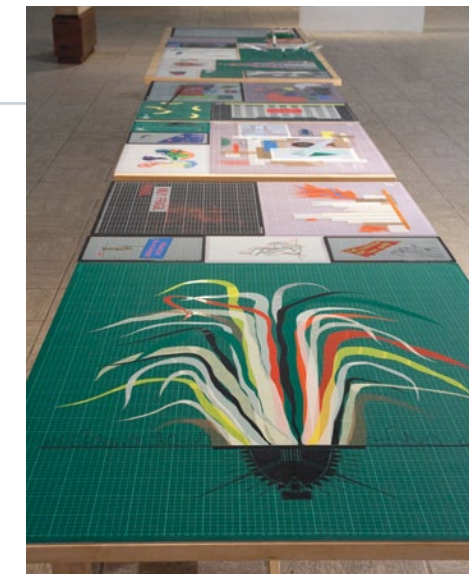
Appropriating Havana's empty billboards as a space for expression, Garaicoa draws fictive signage and architecture onto photographs of existing places, filling both real and invented frames with poetic messages instead of state propaganda.

8. *The Word Transformed, Part 2*, 2009

Using cut adhesive tape to compose images on artists' cutting mats, Garaicoa explores social, political and personal themes that resonate throughout his work.

9. *Bend City (Red)*, 2008

Like Rorschach inkblots, the paper buildings of *Bend City* entice viewers to project meaning onto their forms. Silhouettes of imaginary structures, cut into thin sheets of red cardboard, comprise a cityscape open to dreams of change and revolution.



1. *The Crown Jewels* (*Las joyas de la corona*) 2009

ESMA (ESMA)
German Stasi (Stasi Alemana)
Guantánamo Naval Base
(*Base naval de Guantánamo*)
KGB (KGB)
Línea and A (Línea y A)
National Stadium of Chile
(*Estadio Nacional de Chile*)
Pentagon (Pentágono)
Villa Marista (Villa Marista)

Cast silver
Variable dimensions
Courtesy of Heather and Tony Podesta

2. *For Life...* (*De por vida...*) 2009

Black and white photograph mounted and laminated on Plexiglas
31 ½ x 39 ½ inches
Courtesy of the Artist

3. *Saving Time* 2009

Clock, vinyl
Courtesy of the Artist

4. *Theory and Practice in the 18th Brumaire of K. Marx* (*Teoría y práctica en el 18 Brumario de K. Marx*) 2009

Wooden shelf and 30 books
28 ½ x 46 x 8 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

5. *From the Series To Transform the Political Word into Facts, Finally II* (*De la Serie Para transformar la palabra política en hechos, finalmente II*) 2009

Five black and white digital photographs on metal and stucco
32 x 4 ¼ inches each
Edition: 3 with 2 APs
Courtesy of the Artist

6. *Untitled (Sentences)* (*Sin título (frases)*) 2009

Untitled (El Arte)
Untitled (El Gallo)
Untitled (El Mundo)
Untitled (La Honradez)
Untitled (La Isla)
Untitled (La Polaca)
Untitled (Sin rival)
Untitled (La Casa de las Planchas)

Eight digital photographs mounted and laminated on foam board, pins, thread
60 x 48 inches each
Courtesy of the Artist

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST ALL WORKS BY CARLOS GARAICOA

7. *The Word Transformed, Part 1* (*La palabra transformada, parte 1*) 2009

Six lightboxes with Duratrans black and white photography
Each 35 ½ x 25 x 4 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

8. *The Word Transformed, Part 2* (*La palabra transformada, parte 2*) 2009

1. *Building Cities (Construyendo ciudades)*
2. *I Believe and Don't Believe (Creo y no creo)*
3. *My Last Word (Mi última palabra)*
4. *Negation in My Blood (Negación en mi sangre)*
5. *It Was Difficult to Take (Fue difícil soportar)*
6. *The Bad Seed (La mala semilla)*
7. *Malasaña (Malasaña)*
8. *Abstracción I (Abstracción I)*
9. *Foundation of Democracy (Fundación de la democracia)*
10. *Equal in the Eyes of God (Iguales ante los ojos de Dios)*
11. *Dialogue (Diálogo)*
12. *Bridges (Puentes)*
13. *It Wasn't Possible (No ha sido posible)*
14. *Starry Night (Noche estrellada)*
15. *And if the Cheese... (Y si el queso...)*
16. *The Cold Dish (El plato frío)*
17. *Abstracción II (Abstracción II)*
18. *Thumb Index (Uñero)*
19. *I Hate All Reason (Odio toda razón)*
20. *Spider (Araña)*
21. *Birth (Nacimiento)*
22. *Making Amends (La enmienda que hay en mí)*
23. *Fragile, Very Fragile (Frágil, muy frágil)*
24. *Success, Doubt and Celebration (Triunfo, duda y celebración)*
25. *Comic Billboard (Comic valla)*
26. *Futurist Drawing (Dibujo futurista)*
27. *Fear Nothing (Nada debes temer)*
28. *Puzzle*
29. *Accumulation (Acumulación)*
30. *Intelligent Building (Edificio inteligente)*
31. *Treehouse (Casa en un árbol)*

Adhesive tape, metal, and found objects on 31 cutting mats
Variable dimensions
Courtesy of the Artist

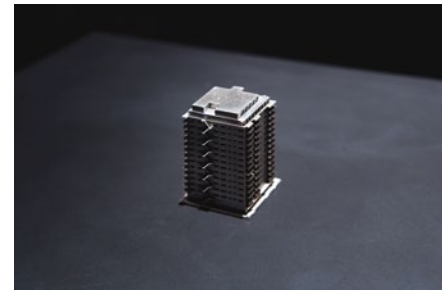
9. *Bend City (Red)* (*Ciudad doblada (Roja)*) 2008

Cardboard, wood, plexiglas
Variable dimensions
Courtesy of the Artist

USF Contemporary Art Museum
August 23 – December 11, 2010

The exhibition *Carlos Garaicoa: La enmienda que hay en mí (Making Amends)* first opened in March 2009 at the National Museum of Fine Arts during the 10th Havana Biennial in Havana, Cuba, and was curated by Corina Matamoros, Curator of Contemporary Cuban Art at the National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana. For its U.S. debut at USFCAM, the exhibition is co-curated by Matamoros and Noel Smith, Curator of Latin American and Caribbean Art, USF Institute for Research in Art.

The Word Transformed, Part 2 (La palabra transformada, parte 2), 2009 - detail



Linea and A (Linea y A)
from *The Crown Jewels (Las joyas de la corona)*
2009, cast silver

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La enmienda que hay en mí (Making Amends)
CARLOS GARAICOA

