

The background of the cover is a complex, multi-layered abstract artwork. It features a dense arrangement of geometric shapes, including triangles, circles, and lines, rendered in a variety of colors such as gold, blue, purple, and brown. The overall effect is one of intricate detail and vibrant energy, typical of abstract expressionism or syncretic art.

FROM MYSTICISM TO THE SYNCRETISM OF REALITY

Approach to Abstraction
in Outsider Art by Dutch
and Cuban artists

RIERA STUDIO



Monique Bouman. 50 cm x 64 cm. Colored pencil on paper.

ABSTRACTION, as a form of artistic representation, exists in a continuum in art, in every element or stroke that the artist uses as a creative tool to transform reality. The simplification of the characteristics (shape, color, texture) of objects and the creation of forms that have no connection to external reality are as valid as the replacing of representation by the process of making itself: when a figure is masked by irregular fragments of shape or strokes of color, or when these forms are produced by the unconscious automaton gesture of the author. It is precisely through the singular and individual production that many outsider artists achieve abstract results in their works, challenging the traditional criteria about the representational character of Art Brut and Outsider Art, linked to the personal experience of each author. Experimenting with the material also leads to unexpected results that cause the loss of representational attributes.

Although the outsider artist's intention may allude to real characters, objects, landscapes, or architectural elements, his creative process, the available materials, and the elements of a subjectivity plagued by extreme mental processes, highly individual idiosyncrasies, and extravagant fantasy worlds undermine these real elements by blurring their details. Each element of form and motif becomes a code and symbol of a personal language.

The work is then charged with a mystical content that even the artist is often unable to explain. In other cases, the outsider artist uses only syncretic graphic elements as an alternative to the obsessive desire to represent not only elements of the real life that surrounds him, but also sensations that he is otherwise unable to communicate.

The current exhibition at Riera Studio: "From Mysticism to the Syncretism of Reality", allows us to observe the different approaches to abstraction in the work of nine outsider artists who come from very different geographical and socio-cultural contexts.

ANTOINE MONOD DE FROIDEVILLE (The Netherlands, 1976) uses a grid of geometric patterns inspired by honeycombs and the precision of their hexagonal forms, and incorporates other symbolic elements influenced by his time as a Muslim.

JESÚS ÁVILA CHÁVEZ (Cuba, 1962) has made more than 700 drawings using discarded objects he finds on the street as tracing molds to create a non-figurative representation of real elements such as bugs, animals, seeds, etc.

MONIQUE BOUMAN (The Netherlands, 1965) works directly on paper with rounded shapes that create a series of outlines, surfaces, and forms, some of which resemble animals or objects whose contours are blurred in a sea of warm colors.

OTTE JACOB (The Netherlands, 1966) has a deep admiration for shapes, their volume and the softness of lines, so his paintings have a high sculptural content. Observing forms and connecting with materials gives him peace of mind, and he uses drawing as an essential source of communication with others.

REYNIEL QUIRCE HERNÁNDEZ (Cuba, 1979) has invented his own method of drawing, in which he turns a drawer on which he places a sheet of paper and uses a ruler to draw free lines with which he then articulates the rest of the composition. Intuitively and without any preconceived idea, he contrasts basic shapes of different colors until he achieves geometric systems reminiscent of images produced by kaleidoscopes.

ROBERTO O'FARRILL MULTÁN (Cuba, 1961) draws plan views of rooms, buildings, houses, sports fields, swimming pools, syncretizing the contents of their interiors to create closed, enigmatic structures of dynamic architecture, giving them a harmony of color and form that closely touches the aesthetics of design.

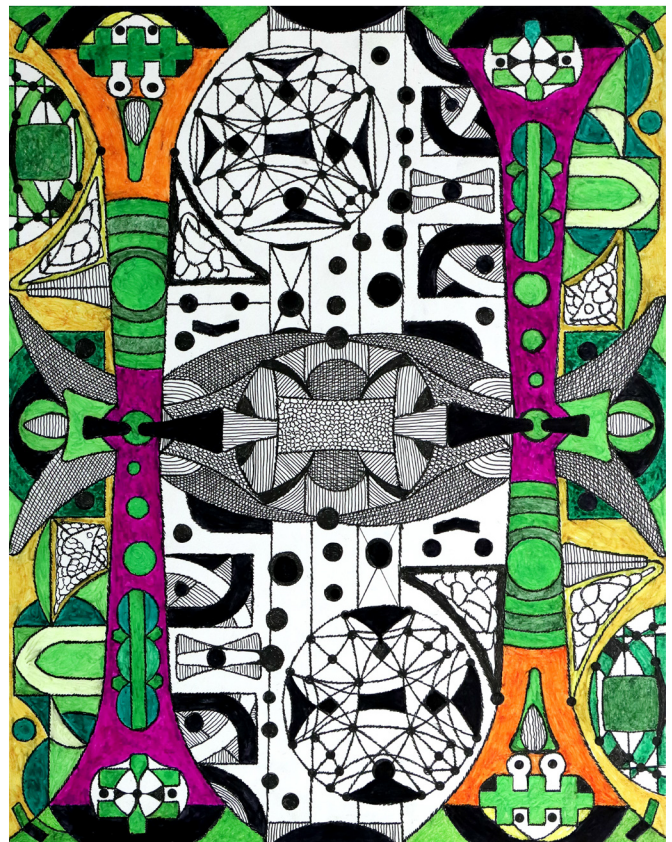
RONALD SCHRIEL (The Netherlands, 1966) has experimented with various materials and techniques developing a unique style. His works consist of multiple layers, both superficial and deep, that tell a story over, under, and through each other, creating mystical images.

RUBEL ADRIAN MATOS CHAMBROT (Cuba, 2002) follows a very meticulous and patient process for the development of his works, which can last up to several months. For him, there is no inspiration, only effort and the hours of work that end only when he has completely covered the surface of the paper with lines, in directions determined by the Notable Angles, and colors chosen completely at random.

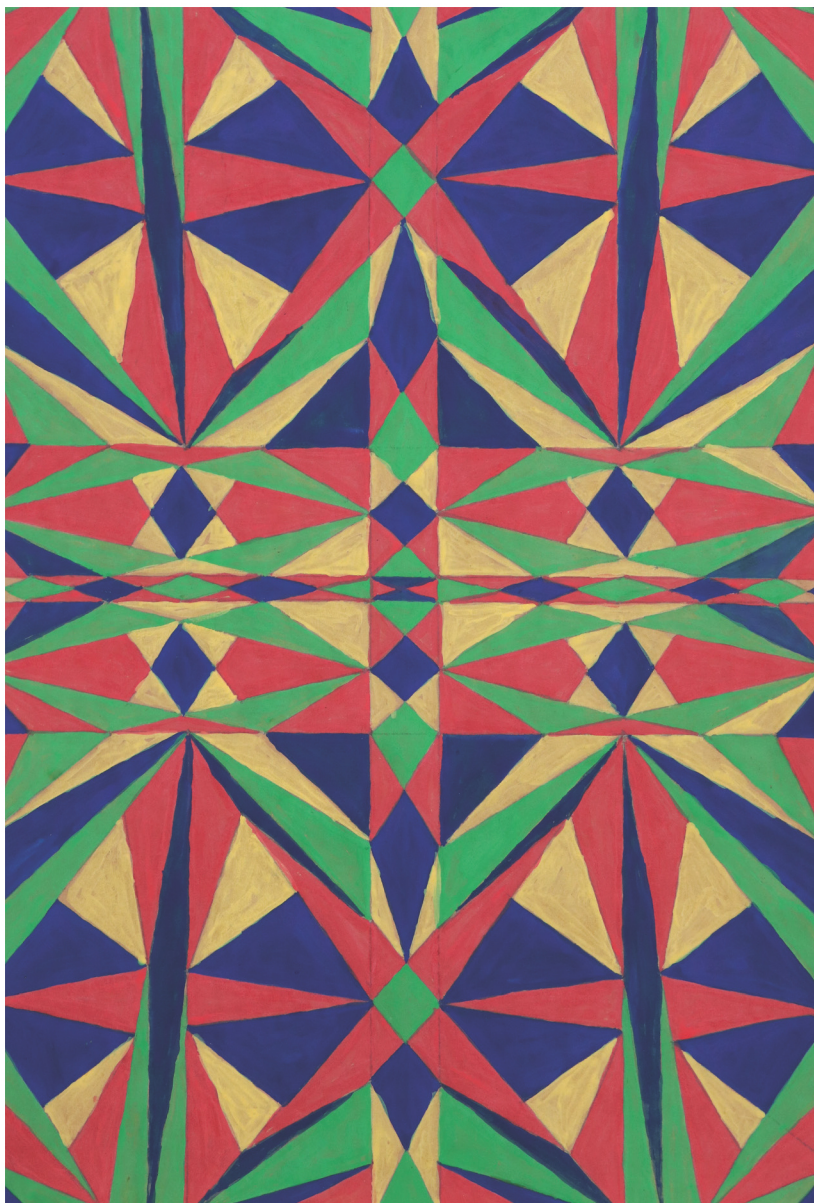
SIEUW WAI CHONG (The Netherlands, 1986) likes to fill the entire surface of the paper with diffuse forms of multiple colors and soft lines like waves that move from the center of the work to its contours. Faces and deconstructed bodies seem to inhabit these colored membranes like encapsulated microbes.



Otte Jacob. 66 cm x 50 cm. Mixed media on paper.



Jesús Ávila Chávez. 51.5 cm x 40 cm. Marker and ballpoint pen on paper.



Reyniel Quirce Hernández. 46 cm x 32 cm. Tempera on paper.

RIERA STUDIO | Art Brut Project Cuba

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ART BRUT was created as a term in the late 1940s by the French artist Jean Dubuffet to draw attention to a form of art with little or no connection with existing art styles. Its creators have not had any formal art training but express their personal experiences and deep inner feelings in a very obsessive way. The artists may be affected by mental disorders, traumatic experiences or social isolation.

OUTSIDER ART began to be used as an English synonym for Art Brut after the English art historian Roger Cardinal published his book of the same name in 1972. Over time, it became more inclusive to refer not only to the art production of people living in extreme mental or social conditions but also to those self-taught individuals who express themselves on the margin of established cultural mainstreams.

This exhibition is the result of an ongoing collaboration between Riera Studio and Galerie Atelier Herenplaats (Rotterdam, The Netherlands) and is supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Cuba. It is also part of the official program of activities of the Month of Europe in Cuba 2024.

Exhibition dates: April 12th - May 12th, 2024

Curators: Samuel Riera, Derbis Campos, Richard Bennaars

Text: Derbis Campos

Front image: work detail by Ronald Schriel



Galerie  Atelier Herenplaats



Reino de los Países Bajos



AIRFRANCE 

