



The Corner of the Arts | April 2018

Elisa Pritzker presents HVCCA [Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Museum]

My column has the purpose of introducing to the readers Latin artists and spaces of art that live in our área, in other places in the United States and the world. This interview to Dr. Livia Straus allows me to present HVCCA, an art jewel in the Hudson Valley. HVCCA is a museum located in Westchester County that you cannot miss. The quality of their exhibitions and their educational programs are exceptional. HVCCA: 1701 Main St, Peekskill NY (914) 788-0100 | www.hvcca



1. When and who founded HVCCA?

My husband Marc and I founded HVCCA in October of 2001. A large part of our collection had been traveling to University museums along the East Coast of the US. During this tour we were asked to give several talks to adults as well as primary, High School and college aged students. All of these lectures addressed the power of Contemporary Art to impact individuals on a very primal level. Seeing the value of using Contemporary Art as a vehicle for innovative educational programs and for supporting emerging artists, we decided to open a space where contemporary art would be featured and where exhibitions of a high quality could be used to invigorate a community struggling economically

as well as dealing with specific racial, ethnic and cultural challenges. These criteria led us to Peekskill, a city where 1/3 of the population is Latino and 1/3 African- American, a city with a mixed economic base.

2. Does HVCCA have Latino Artists in its permanent art collection? Who are they?

HVCCA does not have a collection. It is a Kunshalle* doing exhibition that draw mainly on Contemporary living artists from the regional, national and international communities so that the works encourage a dialogue across borders. We have featured Latino artists in several of our themed exhibitions. For example, in the show Symbolic Space, the work of Ernesto Neto was installed. That same year, 2004, Oscar Alzades, of Columbian heritage, a former Peekskill resident and recent BFA graduate, installed his homage to a former classmate, raped and killed when he was in High school. The installation was placed in the backyard of the HVCCA. In 2005 a partnership between Spain and the HVCCA led to our hosting 5 Spanish artists doing installation and performance work as part of Peekskill Project. Oscar Murillo, Nestor Modigliana, Oscar Murizan, among others, have had their works presented. Itziar Barrio and Maider Echeveria Bilbao were part of our artists in residence program with each spending 3 months living and working in Peekskill and using their works in educational programs, in lectures and as part of studio visits and critiques. This past year the installation of Elisa Pritzker, of Argentine heritage, was featured at HVCCA with her installation on the now extinct Selknam tribe of Patagonia.

3. How HVCCA is inserted in the cultural context of Latin Art in the Hudson Valley and beyond?

The exhibitions at the HVCCA are dedicated to drawing art from the international community so that there is always a global context for cross cultural discussions. We usually do not focus on one culture, or one community (the exception was After the Fall which addressed the impact on artists of the shift from communism to more open societies in Eastern Europe.) Latino artists are included in the exhibitions as part of that dialogue. Within the next 2 years artists from Brazil, Mexico and Argentina will have works exhibited as part of the theme exhibitions now scheduled.

4. Does HVCCA have any special big announcement for the general and Latino public?

Looking to 2018 and on: HVCCA will be known in the future as HVMoCA: Hudson Valley Museum of Contemporary Art. For the first time since opening its doors to the public in March 2004, the exhibition programmed will be focused on the collection of its founders, Marc and Livia Straus. The collection is international in scope with many well-known artists' works acquired while the artists were still in their very early stages, this in keeping with our style of collecting, identifying extraordinary talent in its infancy.

5. Please tell us HVCCA has any idea, project and/or exhibit for 2018 that include Latino Artists.

More on this as we draw closer to the Fall 2018 art season. Watch for special events and many surprises. Website: www.hvcca.org

* A facility that holds temporary art exhibitions

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