

[Barry University](#)
[Institutional Repository](#)

[Theses and Dissertations](#)

2009

Procesos Internos (Internal Processes)

Marina Font

BARRY UNIVERSITY

PROCESOS INTERNOS

(Internal Processes)

by

Marina Font

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of the Department of Fine Arts,

in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Miami Shores, Florida

May 1, 2009

BARRY UNIVERSITY
MIAMI, FL 33161

BARRY UNIVERSITY

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

PROCESOS INTERNOS

(Internal Processes)

by

Marina Font

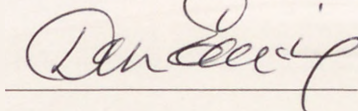
Approved:



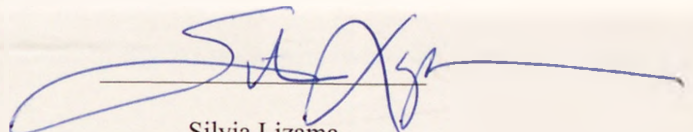
Sara Rytteke
Associate Professor of Photography



Karen Callaghan, Ph. D.
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences



Dan Ewing, Ph. D.
Professor of Art History



Silvia Lizama
Chair, Department of Fine Arts

THE SIS
TR
647
.F64
2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The realization of this thesis was a path that I could not have traveled alone. There were many individuals who accompanied me and provided guidance along the way. I consider myself very fortunate that this journey has included so many inspiring people.

First, I would like to thank Silvia Lizama, who has always been there with good guidance and unconditional support. I have to thank the Barry University Fine Arts Graduate committee: Scott Weber, I could not have done it without his kindness and flexibility, Dan Ewing, Sara Rytteke, Thomas Rockwell and Angi Curreri. I would also like to thank Steve Althouse, Maria Martinez-Cañas, and Maria Brito. All of these people have guided me through my academic program and, ultimately, in discovering my artistic vision.

More thanks go to my good friends, who didn't always understand what I was doing but were there to lend me a hand anyway. A special thanks to my friend Alejandra, for allowing me to be part of her journey. To Sebastian Lombardo, thank you for recovering weeks worth of work when my computer crashed. Thanks to Milagros Nores, for spending her vacation week editing my papers. My heart felt gratitude to those many women who were influences in my life and references to this work.

Finally, I thank my parents for the gift of life, and also would like to express deep and loving gratitude to my family. My existence would not be

complete without the love of my three sons: Maximo, Geronimo and Manuel; and the unconditional love and support of my best friend, partner in life and husband, Tomas Nores.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	i
SIGNATURE PAGE	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	01
AUTOBIOGRAPHY	02
INFLUENCES	06
André Kertész	06
Abelardo Morell.....	08
Ruth Bernhard	12
Robert Rauschenberg	14
Mike and Doug Starn.....	15
Christian Boltanski.....	17
Joseph Cornell	19
Maria Martinez-Cañas.....	21
Maria Brito.....	23
PROCESSES / TECHNICAL INFORMATION	25
PERSONAL AESTHETICS / PHILOSOPHY	31
ARTIST STATEMENT / CONCLUSION	75
REFERENCES	76

ABSTRACT

This thesis contains information on the exhibition *Procesos Internos* (Internal Processes) that was displayed at Barry University's Fine Arts Gallery in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts. The *Procesos Internos* show consisted of seven gelatin silver prints, ten mixed media works, and one large art installation containing seven distinct, though, integrated pieces.

The essay is structured into four sections. It begins with an Autobiography, followed by the discussion of nine visual artists who have influenced my work. The discussion of the artists includes a number of examples of their work as it relates to my own creations. These artists are: André Kertész, Abelardo Morell, Ruth Bernhard, Robert Rauschenberg, Doug and Mike Starn, Christian Boltanski, Joseph Cornell, Maria Martinez Cañas, and Maria Brito. The Processes/Technical information section begins with a diagram of the gallery showing the layout of the works in the exhibit, and includes the description of the technical aspects of the work presented on each section. Personal Aesthetics/ Philosophy begins with a general introduction to the essential concept behind the body of work. Subsequently, it broadens into a description of each individual work, accompanied by corresponding images. The Artist Statement/Conclusion summarizes the critical ideas and significance of the exhibition.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Born in the city of Cordoba, Argentina, I grew up moving from place to place. Scouting and inquiring, I became very observant of my ever-changing environments. Constantly involved in the arts in some way, I used to love taking art classes at school as well as doing special projects like building maquettes or constructing dioramas. If I was not enrolled in a drawing or ceramics class, I would be painting with oils with my father and my older sister, Virginia, at home. We would participate in every painting contest offered by the city where we lived at that particular time. My sister mastered the “perfectionist drawing skills” and my style was more of an “impressionist”.

My father, Carlos María Font, was in the construction business, always searching for new opportunities and always building us new homes. My sister and I would spend hours building various things with the discarded construction materials that were always within our reach.

After graduating from high school and not really knowing what to do with my life, I enrolled in a graphic design program offered at the Escuela de Artes Visuales José Malharro in the city of Mar del Plata. During my first year in art school, I got the opportunity to experiment more with painting and drawing; I also experienced sculpture and photography, which I found to be stimulating and extremely challenging. Hungry to learn more about the medium of photography, I joined the Mar

del Plata Foto Club in the city of Mar del Plata and began taking photography lessons with local professors. I knew very little about photography then and was enchanted by the whole darkroom experience. Working in the darkroom was a life-changing situation. During my second year of graphic design, the course requirements became more specific and technical. The fun was gone, and I lost interest. I spent the rest of the year working as a field hockey coach, the sport I had always played at my local sports club, and as a Physical Education assistant at a local Elementary School. My personal life led me in a completely different direction. I moved to Buenos Aires to attend school and four years later I graduated from I.N.E.F. (Instituto Nacional de Educación Física) with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education. I worked in that field for about eight years.

In 1996, my life changed again when I married Tomas Nores, and moved to the United States where Tomas planned to complete his graduate studies. Once we were settled in Boston and I was waiting for my work permit to arrive, I found myself with time on my hands. I purchased a new camera and began photographing again. In doing so, I rekindled my love affair with photography. I then realized the sensation that working with the medium provoked in me. After Tomas's graduation he got a job and we moved to Miami. Before settling down in Miami we went on a photographic trip to India where I spent my days wandering the streets and photographing. I could not believe that I had spent all those years

disconnected from something that I loved so much and that fulfilled me so completely as an individual.

This experience and a lot of introspection led me to make a radical career change from physical education back to the field of fine arts, and more specifically to my passion, photography. In Miami, I was determined to attend graduate school in fine arts, specifically in photography. I have been walking the graduate school path for many years now. It has been a slow, but relentless venture; interrupted by major life events, such as the birth of my three beloved sons: Maximo, Geronimo and Manuel, and by my close friend's battle with breast cancer, to mention a few. Those events were so intense and time consuming that they left no room for making work. Although these scattered distractions kept me from making art from time to time, they have enriched me as a human being. These life experiences have opened my eyes and made me perceive the world from a new and deeper perspective, enhancing my sensibility as a woman and, foremost, as an artist.

I consider myself very fortunate that my life's journey has included so many inspiring people. These people have guided me through my academic program and, fundamentally, in discovering my artistic process. They have respected my individuality, challenged my ideas, and have taught me to push my limits, in order to bring out the best of me in my work.

I aspire to keep developing a personal style, a style that will, hopefully, unfold along with my continually evolving identity as a woman and as an artist.

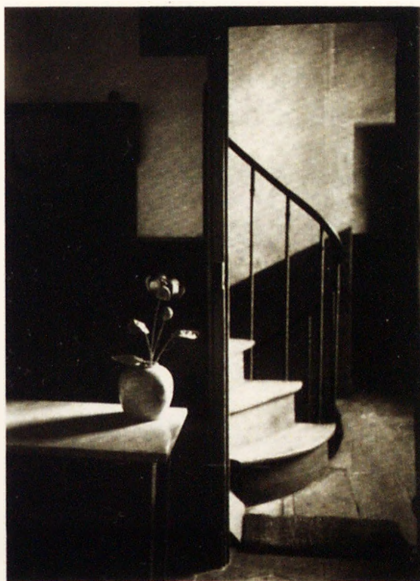
INFLUENCES

Numerous artists have influenced my work. To mention all of them would result in an endless list, which keeps changing along with my evolving identity as an artist. These influences have been increasingly changing from more traditional photographers to visual artists working with non-traditional photographic approaches, artists working with mixed media and, ultimately, to artists who integrate photography with other mediums in their installations. These artists are: André Kertész, Ruth Bernhard, Abelardo Morell, Robert Rauschenberg, Doug and Mike Starn, Christian Boltanski, Joseph Cornell, Maria Martinez Cañas, and Maria Brito.

André Kertész

I have always admired the photography of the twentieth century, and in particular the work of André Kertész. He was one of the first artists who made a substantial impression on me as a photographer. Kertész had the ability to elevate everyday objects into elegant, formal compositions. The way he studied people and the inhabitants of the streets, and the play of light that filled his urban landscapes so dramatically, have contributed greatly to my enthusiasm for photography.

Hungarian born Kertész moved to Paris in 1925, despite the wishes of his family who wanted him to pursue a career in business. He was determined to photograph the sites in Paris and use the city's artistic elements. In his visual records of every day life he utilized the entire vocabulary of modernism: reflections, close ups, and unusual vantage points. His images seem to project poetry rather than a concern with formal problems or didactic ideas. Kertész has been acknowledged to have been central in shaping the photographic style of an entire generation. He was a mentor to photographers such as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa, and Brassai; and has certainly been a longtime influence to my work. This influence is reflected in the series "Streets of Paris" that resulted from a School Photography trip to Paris that I did on July 1998.



**André Kertész, *Chez Mondrain*,
1926, Paris.
(9"x12"glassplate)**



**Marina Font, *Ghost*, 1998,
Chartres, France.
(8" x 10"gelatin silver print)**



André Kertész, *De Pont des Arts seen through the clock of the Institute de France*, 1929-1932, Paris. (6.5" x 9" glass plate)



Marina Font, *Through the clock*, 1998, Paris. (8" x 10" gelatin silver print)

Abelardo Morell

Abelardo Morell is a Cuban photographer and professor who works and lives in Massachusetts. Although he is best known for his "camera obscura" work, where he transforms an entire room into pinhole camera, reducing all light in the room except for a small opening that allows the light to enter, projecting an inverted image of what's outside the room. Morell then photographs the resulting upside-down image. It was Morell's "Childhood" series that most decidedly moved me.

Morell was a street photographer who abruptly changed his focus after his son was born. He focused on things that were closer to home, to an everyday life, intensely charged with emotions.

Like Morell, after giving birth to my three children, my lifestyle changed radically. My days of wandering the streets photographing were gone, and I found myself spending the vast majority of my time at home. Morell's work opened my eyes to, and taught me to treasure, the ordinary. Unlike Kertész who influenced the way I photographed the outside world, Morell focused on things that were closer to his heart, his son's world, and stimulated me to discover the beauty within my home. I started to look attentively at the things that were emotionally close to me, that surrounded me, and in doing so I discovered beauty in the familiar and everyday subjects and objects in my life. My children became my main motifs and were an endless source of inspiration in my work for several years. My images became an emotional and intuitive response to the unsettling but compelling moments of my environment. I found myself making art pieces of surprising intimacy and transcendent beauty, loaded with deep emotional substance. The images I have created revealed an internal world of emotion. These images of my children resulted in three different bodies of work; *Mi pequeño mundo* (My Small World), *Mi pequeño mundo II* (My Small World II), and an art book entitled *Emotions*.

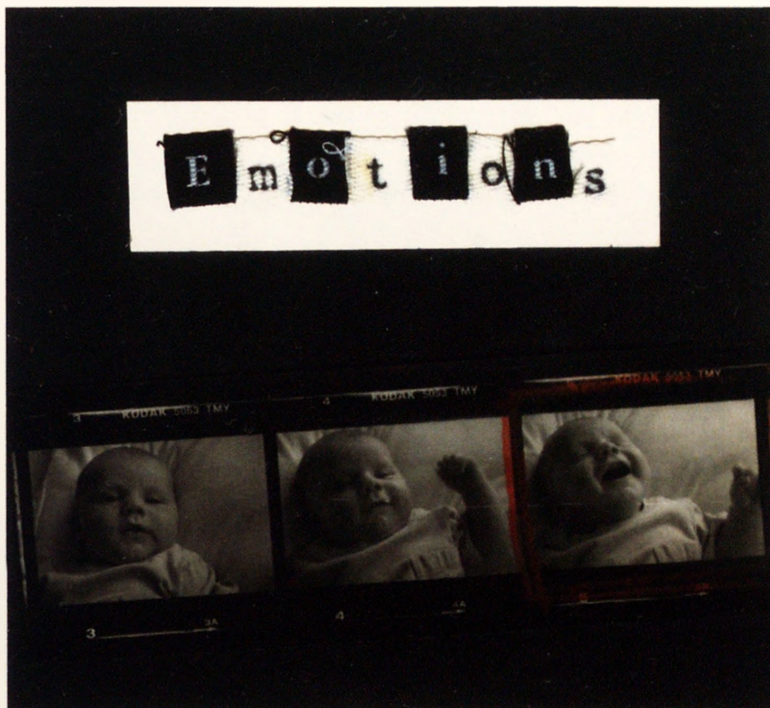
The first two images pictured below, *Tim* by Morell, and *Untitled* one of the images from the *Emotions* Book, represent a parallel between my work and Morell's.



Abelardo Morell, *Tim*, 1989.
(8" x 10" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2004, Miami.
(gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, Cover of "*Emotions*", 2007, Miami, Book Art.

Images of the book "*Emotions*", 2007.



Marina Font, *Maximo* 2004, Miami.
(8"x 10" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Momo*, 2004, Miami.
(8"x 10" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Momo 2*, 2004, Miami.
(8"x 10" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Manulete*, 2000, Miami.
(8"x 10" gelatin silver print)

Ruth Bernhard

As a female photographer, I found my main inspiration in Ruth Bernhard's work. The light treatment in her work, whether the subjects are still lifes or nudes, give her photographs an incredible beauty and harmony.

Hailed by Ansel Adams as "the greatest photographer of the nude", Ruth Bernhard had an intuitive approach to her subjects which enabled her to capture not only the form, but also the connection and spirit of the moment. As she stressed:

"My quest, through the magic of light and shadow, is to isolate, to simplify and to give emphasis to form with the greatest clarity. To indicate the ideal proportion, to reveal sculptural mass and the dominating spirit is my goal." (Ruth Bernhard: Between Art and Life. By Margareta K. Mitchell, San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2000.)

Her work with nudes, for which she is best known, was an essential reference for me when I started photographing the model for the *Processos Internos* series. When I photographed my close friend, who was in an ongoing battle with breast cancer, my thoughts about the images were very clear: I wanted them to be intimate and emotional, to make a connection with the history of what I was seeing, but in a sensual and almost poetic way. I wanted to create beauty from the struggling situation that my friend was going through. Ruth's Bernhard's style of

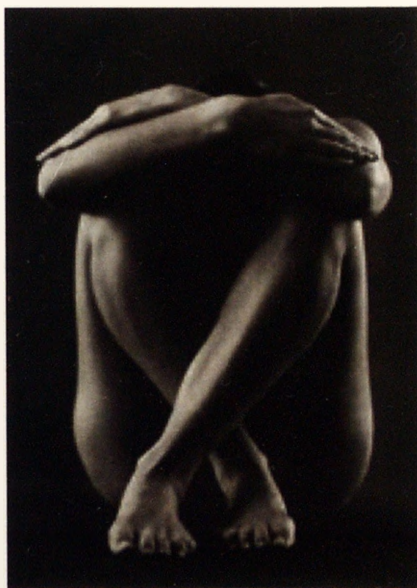
photographing kept recurring my head, and definitely influenced the way I approached the subject. The resulting images were an intuitive response to the developings through the photographing experience, with a constant search for balance and harmony of the forms.



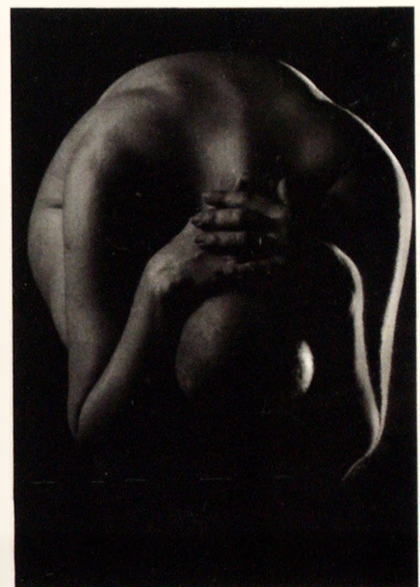
**Ruth Bernhard, *Embryo*, 1934, California.
(Unknown size, gelatin silver print)**



**Marina Font, *Fetal*, 2005, Miami Beach.
(11" x 11" gelatin silver print)**



**Ruth Bernhard, *Within*, 1969.
(unknown size gelatin silver print)**



**Marina Font, *Untitled*, Miami.
(11" x 14" gelatin silver print)**

Robert Rauschenberg

I have always admired the work of visual artist Robert Rauschenberg. His astounding creativity and insatiable intellectual curiosity lead him to explore new materials and new media, with discoveries that have taken him miles beyond paint, canvas and easel.

Rauschenberg created art using primitive, basic materials and combined whatever he found around him in order to deliver his message. His unique style of incorporating images into his artwork and integrating them with various mediums, awakened my curiosity and led me to experiment with my own work. I started to pay more attention to the inherent qualities of all kinds of materials and objects, to study the richness of their pasts and their vivid abstract realities. I suddenly realized the visual and conceptual power to be found in the juxtaposition of different elements with an intentional meaning.



**Robert Rauschenberg, *Rebus*, 1955.
(96" x 131" Oil, graphite and collage on canvas)**

However, it wasn't until my exposure to the work of Mike and Doug Starn -The Starn Twins- that I felt induced to take my first steps into the world of mixed media.

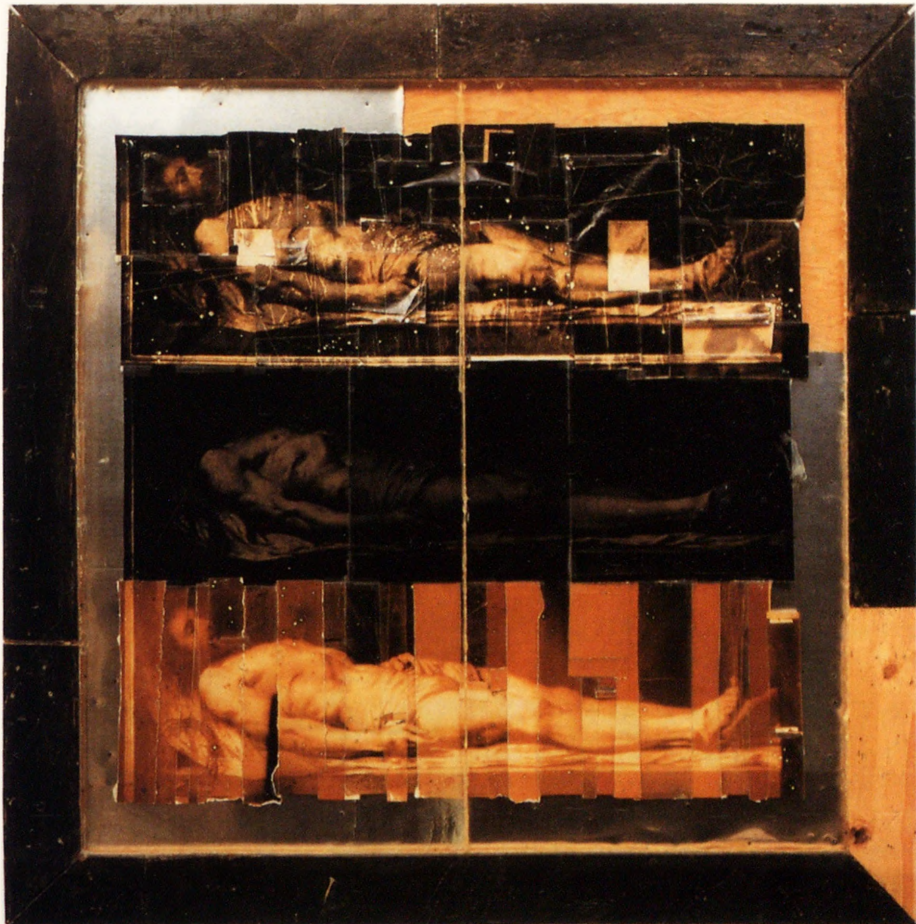
Mike and Doug Starn

When I was first introduced to the work of these artists I was intensely fascinated with their unconventional approach to photography. Until that moment, I had always addressed photography as a purist; the perfectly printed image, spotted and presented in a conventional matt, to be, ultimately, framed.

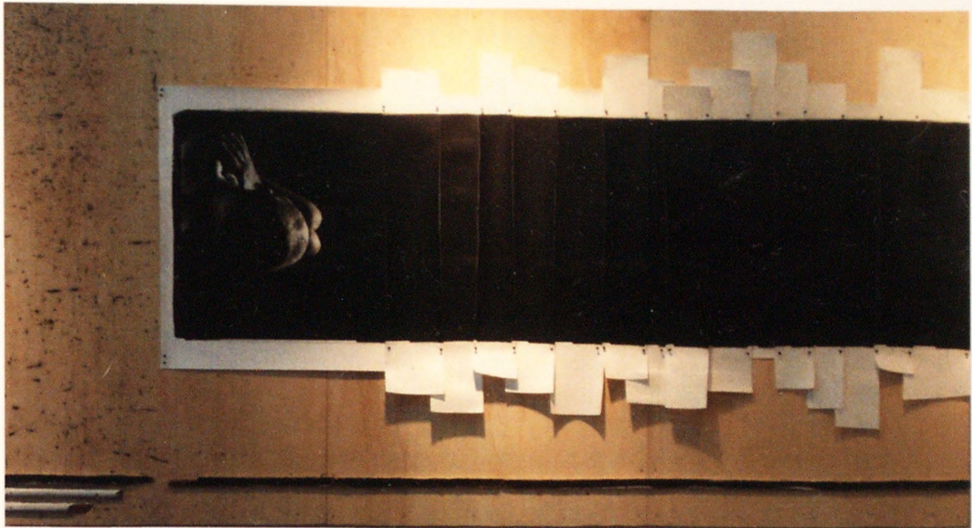
Mike and Doug Starn treat the photographic print as their "canvas." They tear, crease, and cut the paper; they expose it to all kinds of chemicals, producing different tones. The materials used to join and frame works on paper becomes grist for the visual surface of their prints. In the process, they not only broke with the conventions of photography, but they also achieved a unique effect, integrating the usually separate worlds of painting, sculpture and photography.

Unlike Rauschenberg, who appropriated images from other artists and from newspapers, the Starn Twins produce their own photographic images for their pieces. Getting to know the Starns' work and their philosophy of breaking with the conventionalism of photography, led me

to an experimental phase that liberated me from more traditional photographic presentations, and challenged me to get adventurous and innovative with the mixed media world. For the first time I felt an irresistible impulse to defy the way I had always worked. My prints then became the starting point for more complex, layered work, moving between two dimensions and three, even erasing the distinction between them.



**Mike and Doug Starn, *Triple Christ*, 1986, New York.
(65" x 65" Toned silver prints, wood, glass, tape and aluminum)**



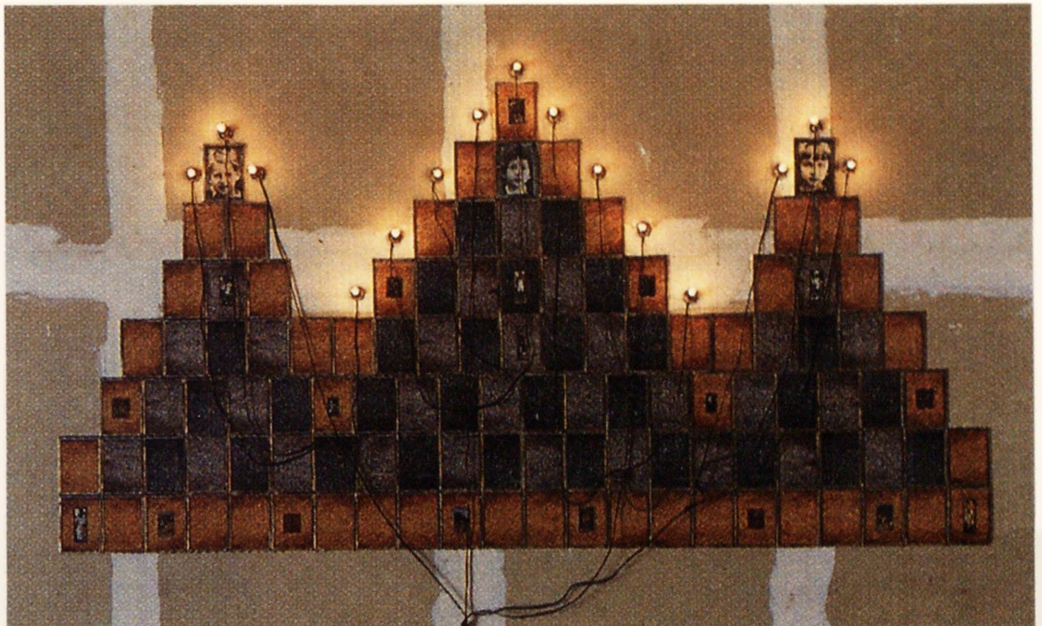
**Marina Font, *Futuro Incierto*, 2007, Miami.
(71 ½" x 38" x 1" gelatin silver prints, nails and acrylic on wood)**

Christian Boltanski

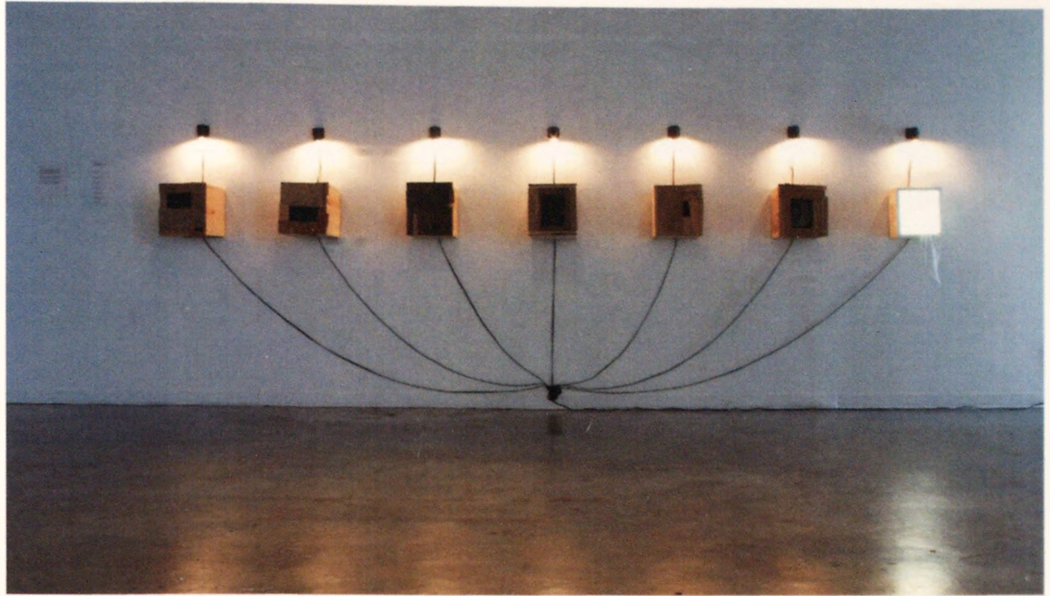
Christian Boltanski's work has been a recent, yet intense, discovery for me. I first got to know his work through the series *Jeux pour un enfant de sept années* (Games of a Seven-Year-Old Child), at the Paris City Museum of Modern Art. I was incredibly moved by his simplistic, though thoughtful, approach to portraying his childhood play memories through a series of small black and white photographs.

In a later series, *Leçons de ténèbres* (Lessons of Darkness), Boltanski capitalized on photography as a relationship between memory

and death. He incorporated photographs in his *Monument: Les Enfants de Dijon* (Monument: The Children of Dijon) installations. Boltanski discovered something latent in ordinary photographs that can make them, in special circumstances, poetic. He utilized photographs of people he knew nothing about which allowed him to manipulate and transform those subjects into objects. His images are intended to stimulate the viewer, and to provoke something different in each spectator based on their own personal experience. In my series, *Procesos internos*, I also turned, like Boltanski, the subject into an object. The portrayed model no longer represented a single persona. Therefore as an object, the figure became impersonal, representing the despair of different women throughout the exhibition.



**Christian Boltanski, *Monuments*, 1985, Paris.
(130" x 63" B&W and color photographs, tin frames and lights with wires, installation)**



**Marina Font, *Laberintos del ser* (Labyrinths of The Self), 2007-08, Miami.
(65" x 12 1/2" x 4" mixed media installation)**

Joseph Cornell

Joseph Cornell was one of the pioneers and most celebrated exponents of assemblage. He had no formal training in art and he is most known for his highly distinctive boxes. In these boxes, he arranged surprising collections of photographs and bric-a-brac in a way that combined the austerity of Constructivism with the lively fantasy of Surrealism. He relied on the Surrealist techniques of irrational juxtaposition and the evocation of nostalgia.

In Cornell's work, I appreciate the way he has created poetry from humble, commonplace objects. His pieces bring together discarded materials and fragments of unpretentious but once beautiful objects.

Like Cornell, I started collecting materials and objects that have been discarded by other people, and incorporated them into my work. I began to realize the latent meaning to be found in them when combined with other elements. In his boxes, Cornell appropriated images from other artists. Unlike Rauschenberg or Mike and Doug Starn, Cornell worked on a very small scale, adding a sense of intimacy to his work.

I had Cornell's work in mind when I created some of the pieces of the series, *Procesos internos*, assembling elements in a matrix of metaphors designed to incite wonder and curiosity; and almost forcing the observer to get closer and more intimate with the piece.



**Joseph Cornell, *Untitled*, 1945-46.
(20 1/2" x 16" x 3 1/2" construction)**



**Marina Font, *Un poco de miedo*, 2007, Miami.
(11" x 15" x 3" gelatin silver print, paper, beeswax and cardboard, on wood construction)**

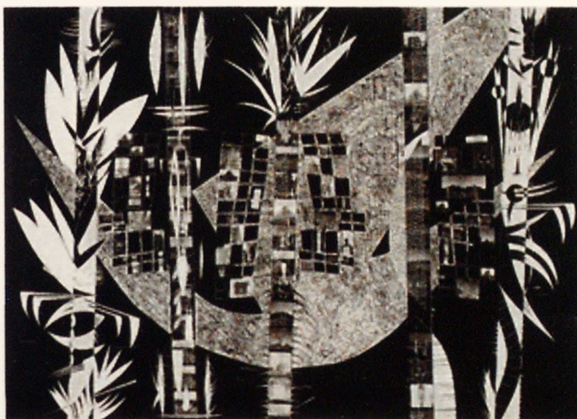
Maria Martinez- Cañas

Taking the altered-surfaces course with artist and professor, Maria Martinez-Cañas, was an eye-opening experience. Not only did I get to know Martinez- Cañas' incredible work, it was her approach to photography that made a big impact on my work.

Maria Martinez-Cañas is a contemporary artist who lives and works in Little Havana, Miami. Maria has a unique, yet elaborate approach to photography. She works with innovative, non-traditional

photographic media. Her photo-based work could result from photograms, photomontages, and even collages in which she draws, cuts and pastes negatives into a rubylith (a red masking film used by graphic designers), to later contact print them. Nevertheless, her images are never a record of the world, but an interpretation of it from an autobiographical perspective.

As I mentioned before, my earlier way of working in photography was as a purist, the perfect printed and traditionally matted print. Working closely with Maria Martinez-Cañas opened my eyes to approaching photography in a non-traditional way, making the photograph a base for the later piece, and not just the piece itself. She encouraged me to challenge my preconceived notions and push my limits, and inspired me to explore, to look for alternatives beyond a traditional print, and to establish connections with different materials, in order to accentuate the concept wanting to be expressed.



**Maria Martinez-Cañas, *Ciudad Jungla (City Jungle)*, 1990, Miami.
(40 3/4" x 57 3/4" Gelatin silver print)**

Maria Brito

After a semester of working with Maria Martinez-Cañas, I became fascinated by working with photography in an alternative way. I decided to keep exploring the world of mixed media and fell into the hands of artist and professor Maria Brito.

Brito is a Cuban artist who works and lives in Miami. She works with painting, sculpture, ceramics and installations. She is best known for her elaborately constructed room-like works that embody narratives of loss and displacement. She also draws upon a personal iconography to create her challenging pieces, with their intuitive appeal and densely symbolic qualities.

Working with Maria Brito was an enriching experience. Not only did I get to experiment with different materials and confront their technical difficulties, my biggest challenge was the transition from composing for a two-dimensional space to work in a three-dimensional one. As a photographer, I had always composed within the limits of a frame, the camera. Working with mixed media allowed me to break away from those boundaries. I began to incorporate my photographs into three dimensional wood constructions, cutting, pasting, and collaging different materials and objects, as well as to venture into the medium of painting.

Maria Brito introduced me to the incredible world of symbology, which allowed me to incorporate different elements into the work that

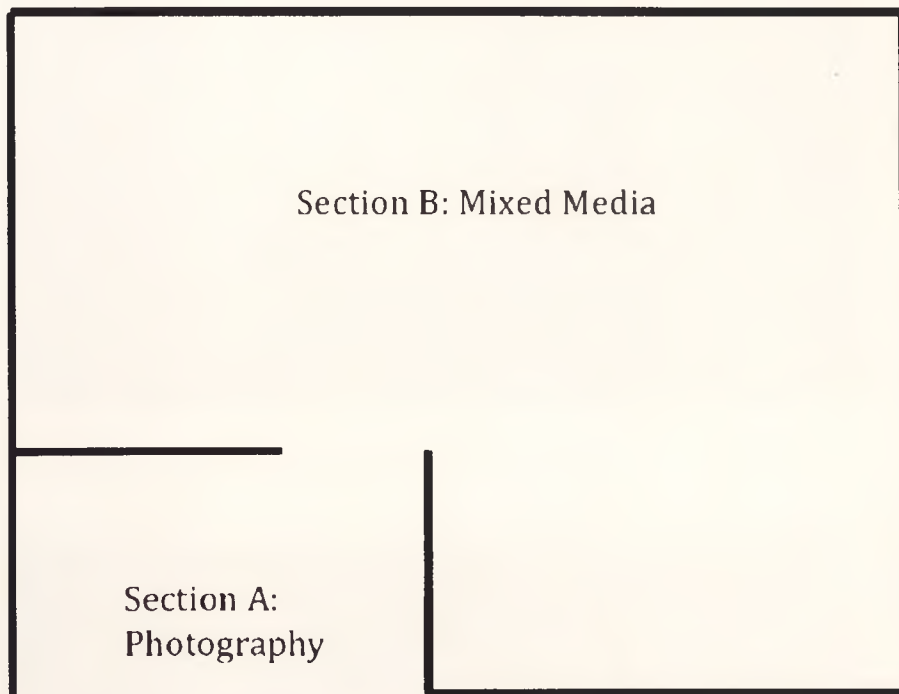
would play an important role in the piece, expanding its significance. She encouraged me to follow my instincts, and to listen to my inner artist, in order to engage my sensibility to my work.



Maria Brito, *El Patio de mi Casa* (My house's patio), 1997, Miami. (95 1/2" x 68 1/4" x 65" acrylic on wood and mixed media)

PROCESSES / TECHNICAL INFORMATION

For the installation of the body of work *Procesos Internos*, the gallery was divided into two distinctive areas, Section A and section B, as shown in the diagram below.



Section A displayed seven traditional gelatin silver prints and functioned as an entrance leading the viewer to section B. This special division of the exhibition was designed to create a more intimate space for the work displayed in the following section B, where the mixed media

work was presented. Moreover, this layout was created to emphasize the breakout from a more traditional photographic presentation, to an array of alternative mixed media pieces.

The works in section **B** consisted of nine mixed media pieces and one art installation.



Fig. 1: perspective of section A.



Fig. 2: perspective of section A.



Figure 3: perspective of section A.

All seven pictures displayed in Section A of the exhibition were 11 x 14 inch gelatin silver prints, traditionally matted, framed and displayed. The photographs of the subject were taken in the studio with two different format cameras: a Canon 35mm and a Hasselblad 120mm camera, and printed in a traditional darkroom on fiber-based paper. All of the pieces in section A remained untitled and represent the initial point from where the work in section B evolved.

Section B: Mixed Media

The making of the pieces in this section B was, in many ways, much more elaborate than the images in the straight photography section. It was a long learning process that challenged me throughout. Not having

vast experience in mixed media, I had to experiment with a wide variety of materials in order to find the results I was looking for.

The images in section **A** served as a starting point for the pieces exhibited in the largest space of the show, section **B**. These images were printed in many different ways: traditional gelatin silver prints, inkjet prints and ortho-litho prints. Some of the images were toned, others altered, scratched, painted, waxed and nailed. As I explain more fully below (see page 38), combining the images with different materials allowed me to achieve the intended content of the work and the desired aesthetic look. Some of the materials utilized were: wood, nails, glue, fabric, cardboard, beeswax, found objects, egg shells, buttons, hand made papers, acrylics, gesso, wire, cable and light bulbs.

The title of each piece directly relates to the concept of the work that I am trying to portray.



Fig. 4: perspective of section **B**.

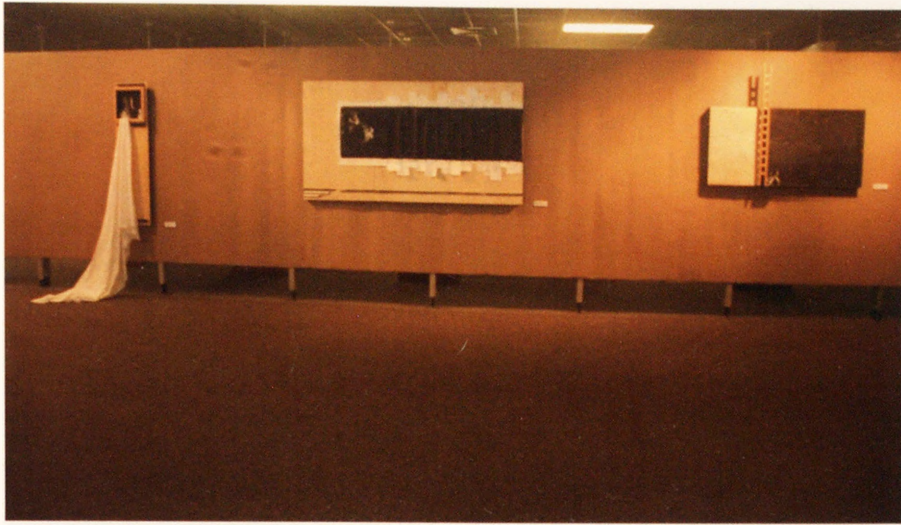


Fig. 5: perspective of section B.



Fig. 6: perspective of section B.



Fig. 7: perspective of section B.

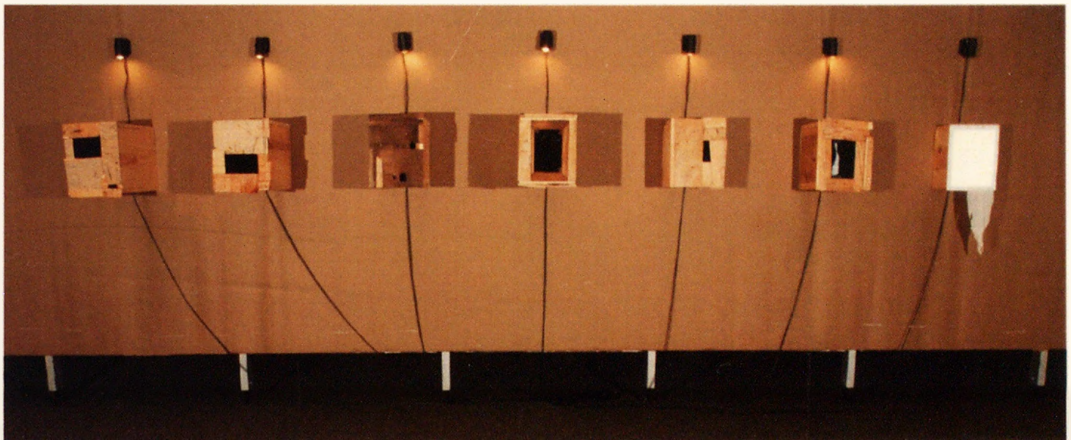


Fig. 8: perspective of section B.

PERSONAL AESTHETICS / PHILOSOPHY

Procesos Internos is the culmination of a constant search for a new personal and intimate ways of expression. This particular work was initiated in an intuitive way, shaped by the coexistence of emotions, feelings, perceptions and reason. I began by portraying a close friend, Alejandra, who was going through a period of struggle with breast cancer (as presented in section A of the gallery), and then it was broadened to connect to different women that were close and influential in my life. I ultimately ended by tying the connection of these influences to my inner self. In the work presented in section B of the exhibition, the portrayed subject lost its subjectivity, to formally become an object. She no longer represented a single persona. Therefore as an object, the figure came to represent the despair of different women throughout the exhibition.

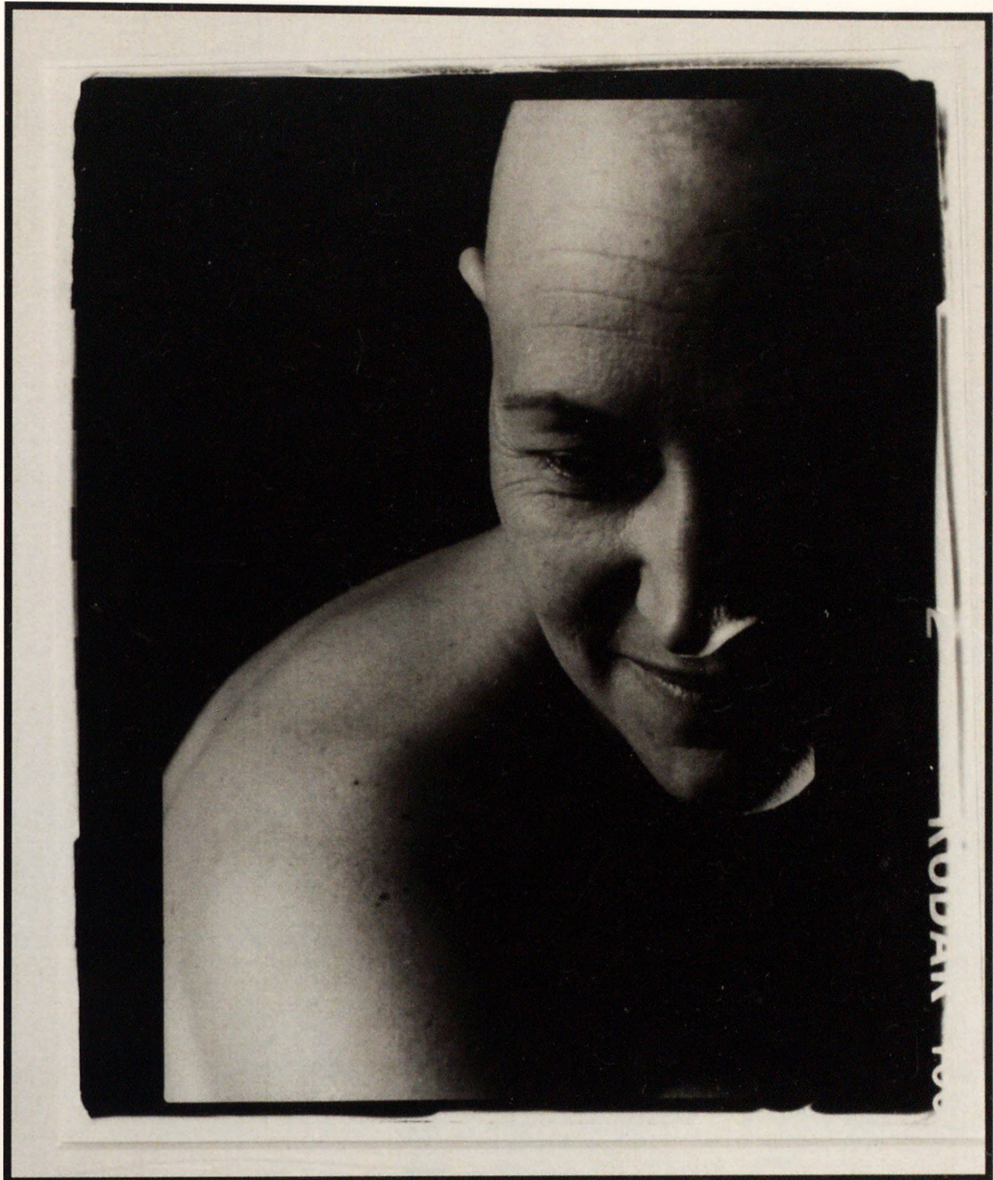
Section A:

The work presented in this section consists of seven images of a female subject that became, in the later pieces, the object that represented different women throughout the exhibition. I chose to portray my subject nude, to enhance the sense of intimacy and vulnerability in the work. The exhibited images are the result of a spiritual connection with the subject, with a constant search for visual harmony and balance beyond capturing the ordinary human experience. All the pieces in this section of the gallery

remained untitled, with the intention of being presented as the starting points for the later, more elaborate work exhibited in section **B**. The images in this section were displayed with an accent on the visual aspect; this order is preserved below.



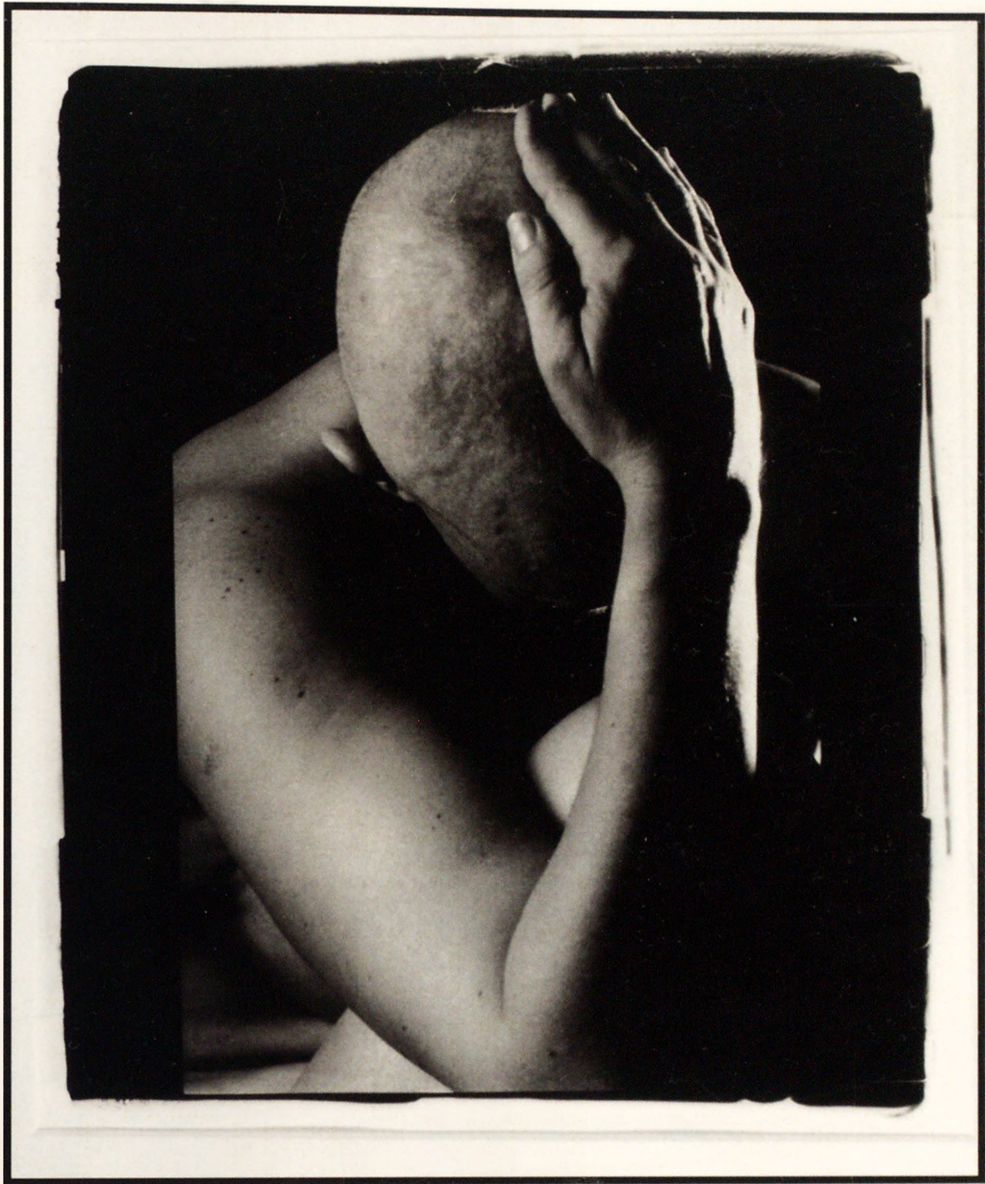
Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27" x 31" gelatin silver print)



**Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)**



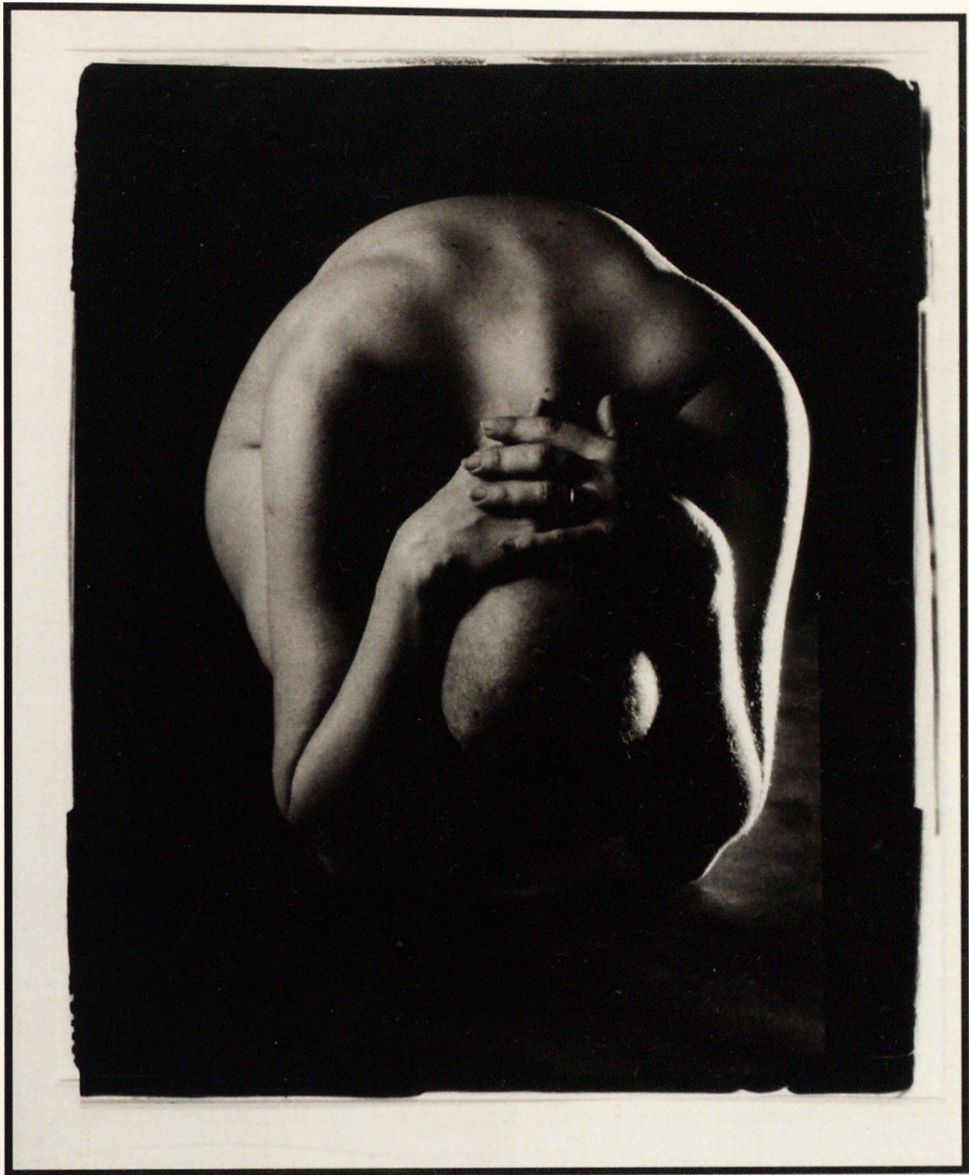
**Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)**



**Marina Font, Untitled, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)**



Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)



Marina Font, *Untitled*, 2005, Miami.
(27 x 31" gelatin silver print)

Section B:

My introduction to mixed media not only represented a challenge in utilizing and mastering new materials; it paved a different approach to the method I used in creating my work. I felt the urge to use alternative mediums because I could not faithfully express the subject's emotions in that particular period of her life with traditional photography. Mixed media allowed me to rethink my work utilizing a process, rather than limiting my reaction to a single moment when the picture is taken. I was discovering ways to explore the greater expressive power of juxtaposing and collaging learned from Rauschenberg, The Starn twins and Cornell, adding images in an intuitive way. The materials employed in each mixed media work were carefully chosen to create a connection with the concept of the work, and enhance the emotions it was meant to convey.

As a photographer, I had always worked by composing within the confines of a frame, the camera. Mixed media forced me to break away from those boundaries and challenged me to think and work in a three-dimensional space. Working in a more open but complex space helped me to better relate to the nature of the work. My photographs were the starting point for the new more sculptural pieces, integrating the photographs with materials that could add to the content of the piece.

The work was intentionally exhibited in an order that followed an emotional state. It began with the subject's dark period of anguish and desperation, transitioned to a hopeful phase, and ultimately reached a

sense of achievement with a peaceful insight. A more detailed commentary on the philosophy and aesthetics of each piece that constitutes the *Procesos Internos* exhibition has been broadened in this portion of the thesis. The description of the ten pieces is accompanied by a photograph of the corresponding work. The list of the pieces in section **B** is detailed below:

1. *Un poco de miedo* (A Bit of Fear)
2. *Escalera* (Ladder)
3. *Legado* (Legacy)
4. *Fetal* (Fetal)
5. *Vínculos* (Links)
6. *Futuro Incierto* (Uncertain Future)
7. *Ambivalente* (Ambivalent)
8. *Escalera II* (Ladder II)
9. *Heridas que cura el tiempo* (Wounds That Time Can Heal)
10. *Laberintos del ser* (Labyrinths of the Self)
 - 10.1. *Negro profundo* (Deep Black)
 - 10.2. *Dejame ser* (Let Me Be)
 - 10.3. *Blue Room*
 - 10.4. *Ansias de Luz* (Willing for Light)
 - 10.5. *Metáfora del blanco* (The Methaphor of White)
 - 10.6. *Abandonando las murallas* (Abandoning the Walls)
 - 10.7. *Luz y blanco* (Light and White)

1. *Un poco de miedo* (Bit of Fear)

This was the first piece in the *Procesos Internos* series. It was the result of an intuitive collection of different objects and materials incorporated with a photograph (gelatin silver print). I intentionally reduced the size of the photograph to force the observer to get closer, and appreciate the various textures, elements and symbolism.

The unpretentious black box and its contents represent an altar. In this altar, the viewer can observe a display made out of cutout wood in an ambiguous form that can be interpreted as either a nest or a trap. In the interior of this chamber, and immersed in the darkness, the observer finds an image of a frightened woman retreating to the most primitive condition of the self: the fetal position. Below and towards the center of the box, a cardboard construction resembles a broken calendar that symbolizes what her life has been reduced to (counting sessions of chemotherapy).

Below this calendar and equidistant from the center are two small openings that hold up a pair of rolled letters. The letters have been sealed with wax in order to render them illegible, in the hope that they will never need to be used.



**Marina Font, *Un poco de miedo*, 2007, Miami.
(11" x 15" x 3" gelatin silver print, cardboard, paper, beeswax and
acrylic on wood construction)**



Un poco de miedo, detail.



Un poco de miedo as viewed in gallery.

2. Escalera (Ladder)

In *Escalera* there is a distinct differentiation between two worlds intentionally accentuated by the placement of contrasting planes. The black portion of the piece represents the hostile world, with its wounds and coarse textures. It has been pierced by a line of forty nails that run uninterrupted from right to left, representing the subject's ordinary journey through life. In contrast, the "idyllic" world is embodied in the lighter side, on a more delicate untreated wood.

Where the nail line comes to an end one can see a cut-out image of a woman echoed in three overlapping waves, with her eyes looking upward to a ladder that runs towards the heavens. That ladder represents the breakout from her difficult world and the hope of an opportunity towards enlightenment.



**Marina Font, *Escalera*, 2007, Miami.
(48" x 24" x 1 1/2" gelatin silver prints, inkjet print with beeswax,
nails and acrylic on wood construction)**

“In Escalera, a ladder extends from the bottom of a flag like plywood surface into an empty space above. Next to it is the photographic profile of a woman, whose head is clean-shaven; her eyes blissfully follow the ladder’s rungs heavenwards. The woman’s image is echoed by several cutouts as if she were praying in waves, the blacked-out expanse behind her evoking a daunting trial”. (Suarez de Jesus, Carlos: “Meeks Inherits” Miami New Times, Aug. 2007)



Escalera, details

3. Legado (Legacy)

Legado immerses the subject in a dark frame, resembling the particular period that the subject was drawn into. It is a piece that epitomizes the projection that each individual makes in this world. This projection is represented by the white fabric that drapes over the woman's shoulder, extending its length outside the frame and reaching to the outside world, hoping to connect with the viewer.

In this piece, the wood once more represents the woman's skin, with its scars and wounds; a result of the vicious relationship with her immediate physical and psychological world.



Marina Font, *Legado*, 2007, Miami.

(12"x 48" x 1 1/2" gelatin silver print, fabric, acrylic and gesso on wood construction).



4. Fetal: (Fetal)

Fetal is the only piece of the series that it is not attached to the wall, echoing the way an unfertilized egg detaches itself from the uterus.

The assembly consists of a wooden box that contains and protects some delicate eggs. The eggs are furthermore guarded by some nails, whose sharp ends stab upward at the viewer. Upon closer inspection, one can see that some of the eggs have been cracked and exposed, embracing in their interiors an image of a nude woman in the fetal position. This image has been sealed with beeswax, giving it a yellowed surface and resembling deadened time.

The viewer can interpret the cause of the cracking as coming from an agent that, although it seems external, is entrenched within the inner, visceral self.

This piece symbolizes fertility: the female capacity of engendering life within one's self; this capacity being one of the most precious, although most delicate, of all women's attributes.



Marina Font, *Fetal*, 2007, Miami. (Lateral view)



**Marina Font, *Fetal*, 2007, Miami. (Top view).
(13" x 13" x 4" inkjet prints on beeswax, eggshells, nail, egg container
and acrylic on wood)**



***Fetal*, detail**

5. *Vínculos* (Links)

Vínculos portrays the same female subject imprisoned in a black frame. This black frame represents the period of agony she is going through in her ongoing battle with breast cancer. The photograph of the main subject has been intentionally placed at the bottom portion of the piece, in order to accentuate the idea of emotional conflict, warfare and confusion.

Above this frame is an interlinked array of photographs of the subject's loved ones that represent the woman's thoughts. These images emphasize her immediate and earthly links, and reflect her biggest worries of what she's most afraid to leave behind: her two daughters.



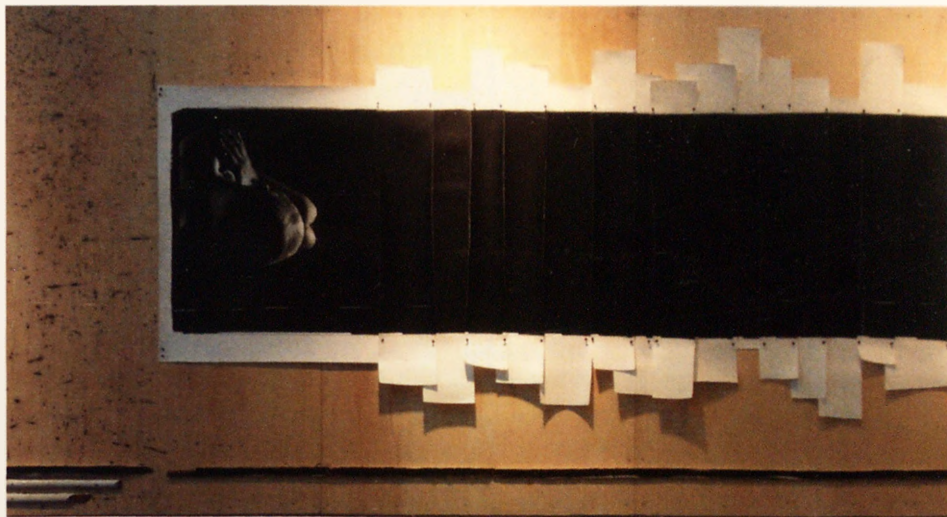
**Marina Font, *Vínculos*, 2007, Miami.
(12" x 48" x 11 1/2" gelatin silver prints and
acrilyc on wood construction)**



6. *Futuro Incierto* (Uncertain Future)

Futuro Incierto expresses its significance by its title. The materials employed in this piece were materials that I related to pain and suffering. The woman's skin is once more represented by the scarred and damaged wood. The wood shows, through its imperfections, that the woman has traveled an excruciating life path.

The portrayed, frightened woman that lays in darkness has adopted a fetal position. She has been showered by a caressing, warm light; the same light that shines on the reiterative photographic strips aligned through the image. The strips symbolize periods of uninterrupted distress pierced, yet also held, by nails. The ongoing, repetitive periods form a pattern that epitomizes the future. The dark wood line under the photographs symbolizes a time-line interrupted abruptly by one single, unprecedented event.



Marina Font, *Futuro Incierto*, 2007, Miami.
 (71 ½" x 38" x 1" gelatin silver prints, nails and acrylic on wood)

7. Ambivalente (Ambivalent)

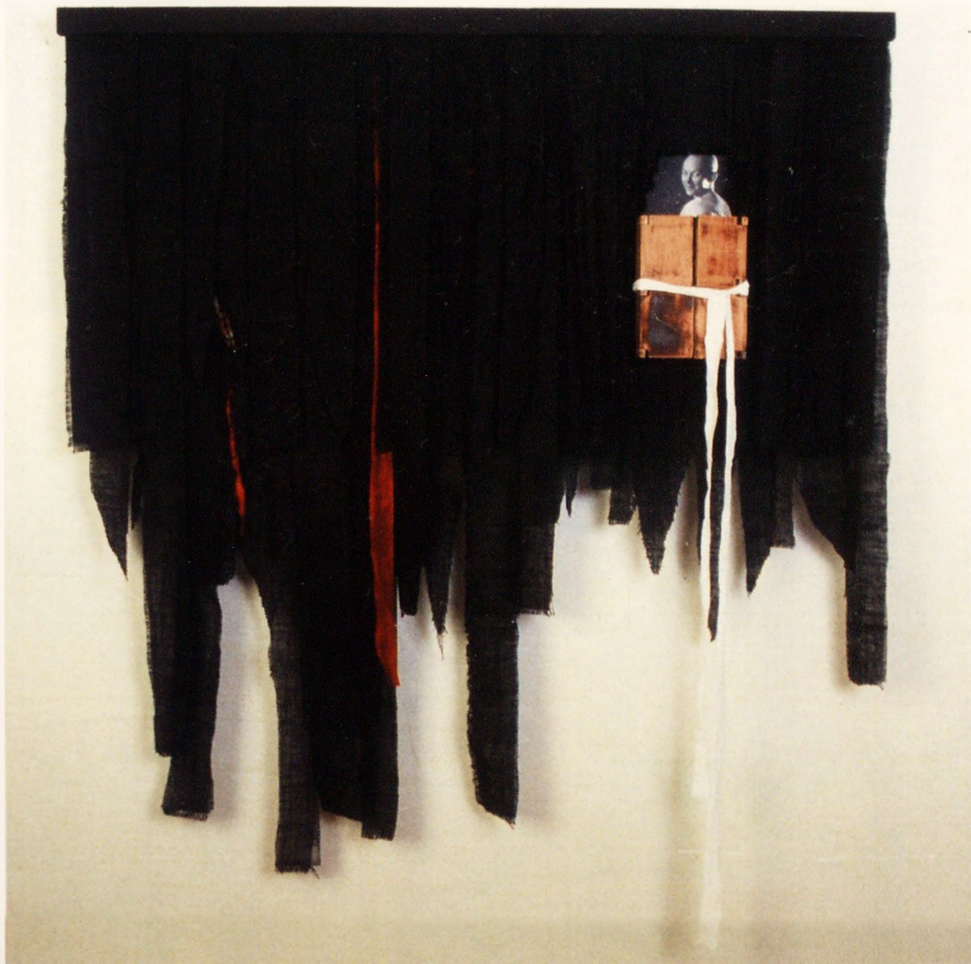
The idea of *Ambivalente* came to me easily and quickly, but the execution proved to be very difficult. Taking the abstract idea to its materialization presented many challenges: from exploring materials and their symbolism, to composing and working in a three-dimensional space.

The work started with the idea of the times of suffering in a woman's life being represented in a theatrical way by overlapping shreds of black fabric. The top right corner, and beneath the black strips, one can observe an image of a portrayed woman defiantly and desperately connecting with the viewer. Below this image is a wood box that represents her physical existence in this world. The partially open box is bound by a white fabric string that contains and protects her inner self from the outside world. The bottom left portion of the piece, delivers a subtle opening representing a feminine cavity that cradles organic forms represented by the color buttons. These organic forms epitomize the basic structural unit in all organisms: the human cell.

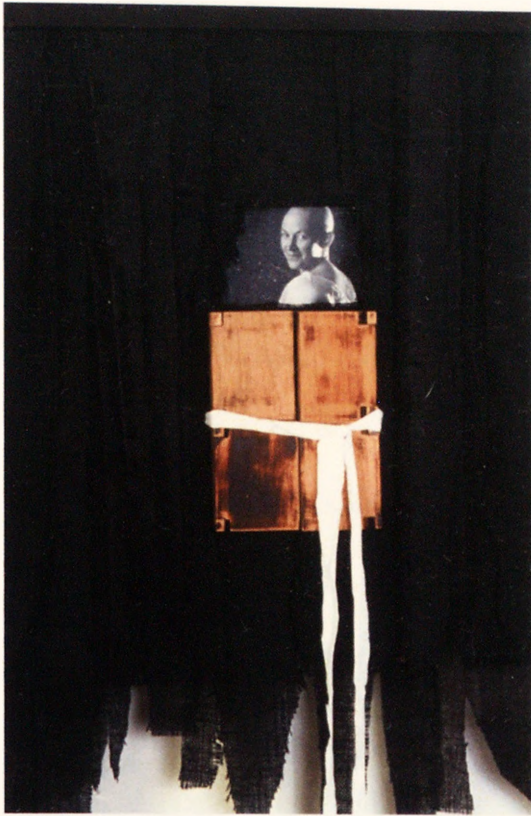
As a reviewer commented:

"Ambivalent, one of Font's larger pieces, is curtained over in black burlap strips. Observing her work, ones come with the sense of the artist creative process, how she tills the furrow of ideas, cutting and pasting thoughts and following through. In this work, Font has placed a small image of her chum in the upper right corner, like a postal stamp in a

loaded envelope, to deliver a message. It is the only one of Font's pieces in which the woman looks out at the viewer with a smile smacking of deliverance. Underneath the woman's hopeful visage, though, Font has shiftily placed a sealed box, tied off with flowing white string. The artist seems to hint that inside us all, true meaning is confined. (Suarez de Jesus, Carlos. "Meeks Inherits." Miami New Times. Aug. 2007)



Marina Font, *Ambivalente*, 2007, Miami.
**(48" x 47" x 4" gelatin silver print, fabric, buttons, wood box,
nails, gesso and acrylics on wood construction**



Ambivalente, detail 1.



Ambivalente, detail 2.

8. *Escalera II* (Ladder II)

The idea for *Escalera II* was born several months after *Escalera*. The first *Escalera* piece emphasized a woman's search for enlightenment. *Escalera II* centered on illustrating the subject's sense of hope and feeling of blessedness after having achieved a peaceful insight.

This work depicts the subject elevated from her mundane world, leaving behind her hostile past while scattering a radiance of golden energy. Among closer inspection of the soft, swirling lines of radiance, one can appreciate that they have been made with a row of carefully placed nails. These nails are a masculine material that takes on a beautiful feminine and organic shape that the viewer can surmise, by this ironic use of materials, that something blissful can come from adversity.



Marina Font, *Escalera II*, Miami, 2008.
(72 ½" x 69 ½" x 3 ¼" ortho litho print, acrylics, nails on wood)



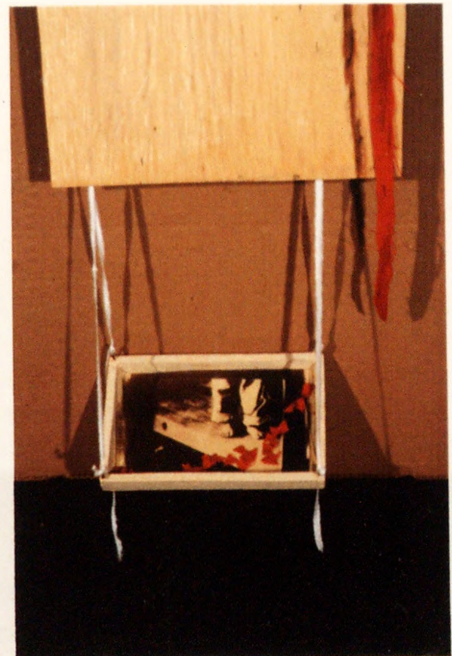
Escalera II, details.

9. *Heridas que cura el tiempo* (Wounds That Time Can Heal)

The significance of this work refers to those wounds that only time can heal, the wounds of the heart. In *Heridas que cura el tiempo*, one can see a piece of rectangular wood that symbolizes a human figure. On its top right, a piece of square wood protects and grasps a heart from being penetrated by nails. The heart has been wrapped with white bandages, and obscures an image of a woman in attempt to hide her identity.

Even though the heart has been protected from the thirty-eight nails that penetrate the frame, it is still bleeding, presumably from past events that have wounded the heart.

At the bottom of the piece, a photograph represents her childhood experiences. This image is enclosed in a swinging box, that serves as a receptacle for the bleeding heart.



Heridas que cura el tiempo, details.



Marina Font, *Heridas que cura el tiempo*, 2008, Miami.
(65" x 12 ½" x 4" van dyke print, inkjet print, beeswax, fabric, nails
and acrylic on wood)

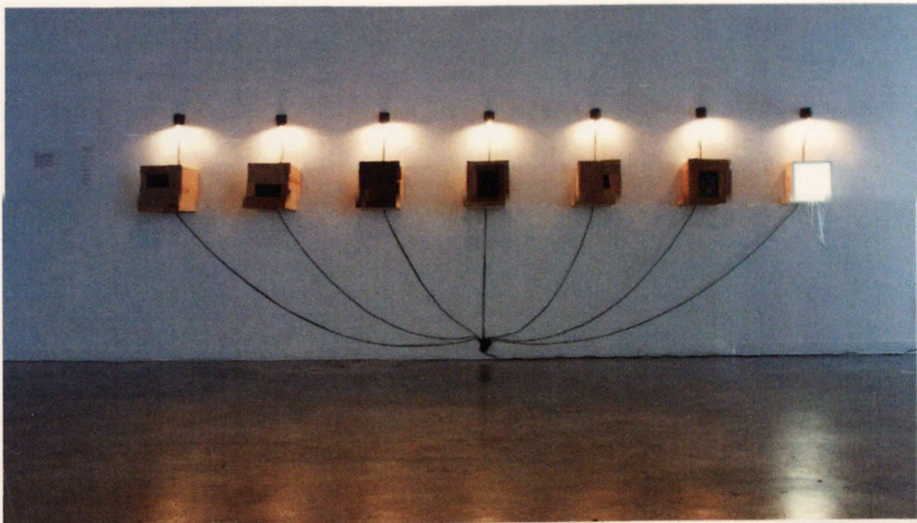
10. *Laberintos del ser* (Labyrinths of the Self)

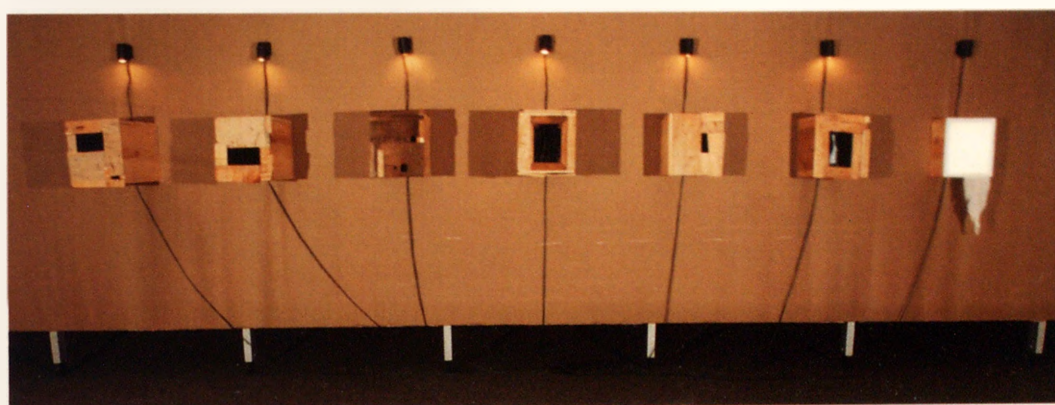
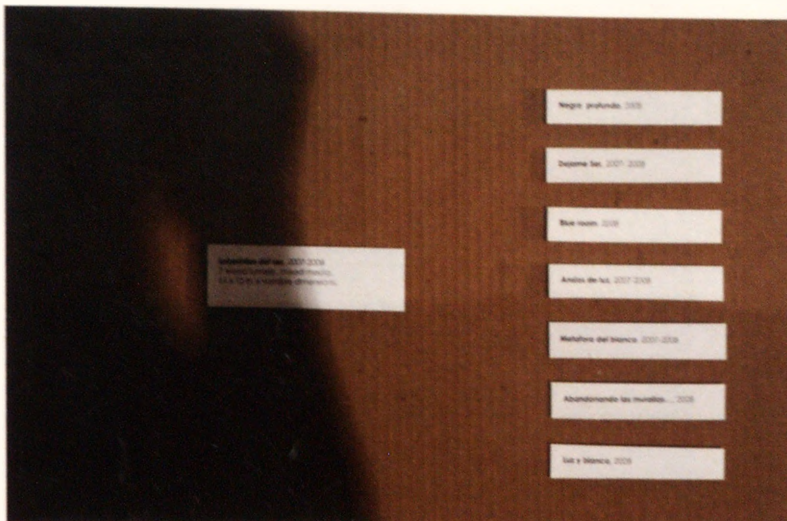
Laberintos del ser is the largest piece of the exhibition. It consists of seven individual wood boxes connected at the bottom by a knot of electrical wires that drop from each box's light source.

Although each of these boxes houses its own concepts and symbolism, they can be conceived as a single unit. The unified installation refers to a greater concept; the constant search, over a lifetime, of a woman finding her true identity, and her pursuit for enlightenment.

The concept of the seven boxes embodies the notion of a woman's period of despair in a particular time. It also captures one of many symbolisms that the number seven evokes: pain. The tunnels represent the dark journeys that the mind goes through in those periods of anguish. Each of these tunnels has been illuminated with a light serving as a reflection of hope. Each of them has been titled according to the concept they contain.

The piece is intended to be viewed from left to right to better understand the flow of ideas.

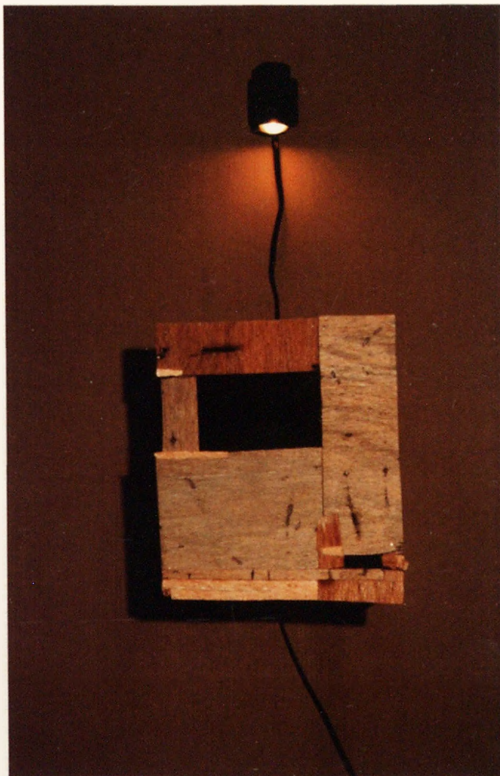




**Marina Font, *Laberintos del ser*, 2007-08, Miami.
(65" x 12 1/2" x 4" Mixed media installation)**

10.1. Box 1: *Negro profundo* (Deep Black):

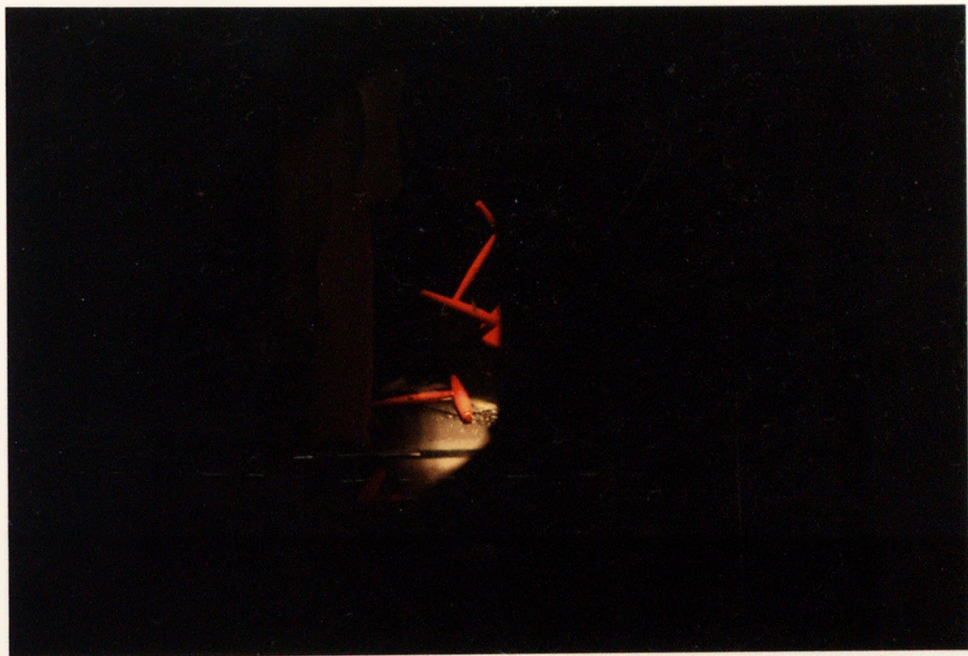
The first box in the series encloses an organic, black cavity, through which one can perceive an array of elements: a red broken chair that represents the self, an image of the subject, a mirror and some white fabric strips draping from above. These elements can be observed through two separate openings that represent different points of view of the same incident. The smaller opening (a) shows a subject, symbolized by a broken red chair, and the reflection of the environment where she stands. The larger opening (b), reveals not the subject, its reflection in a mirror intentionally placed at the end of the chamber.



***Negro profundo*, from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007- 08, Miami.
(11" x 13" x 26" mixed media box)**



Negro profundo, detail as seen through opening a.

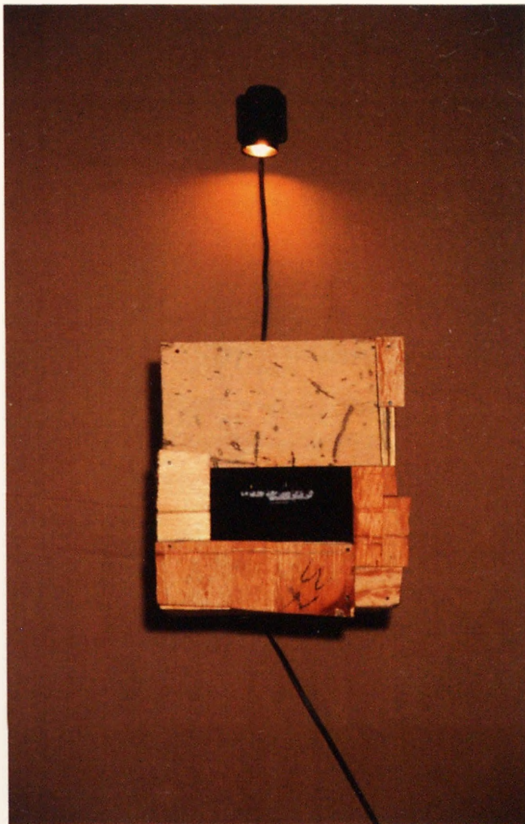


Negro profundo, detail as seen through opening b.

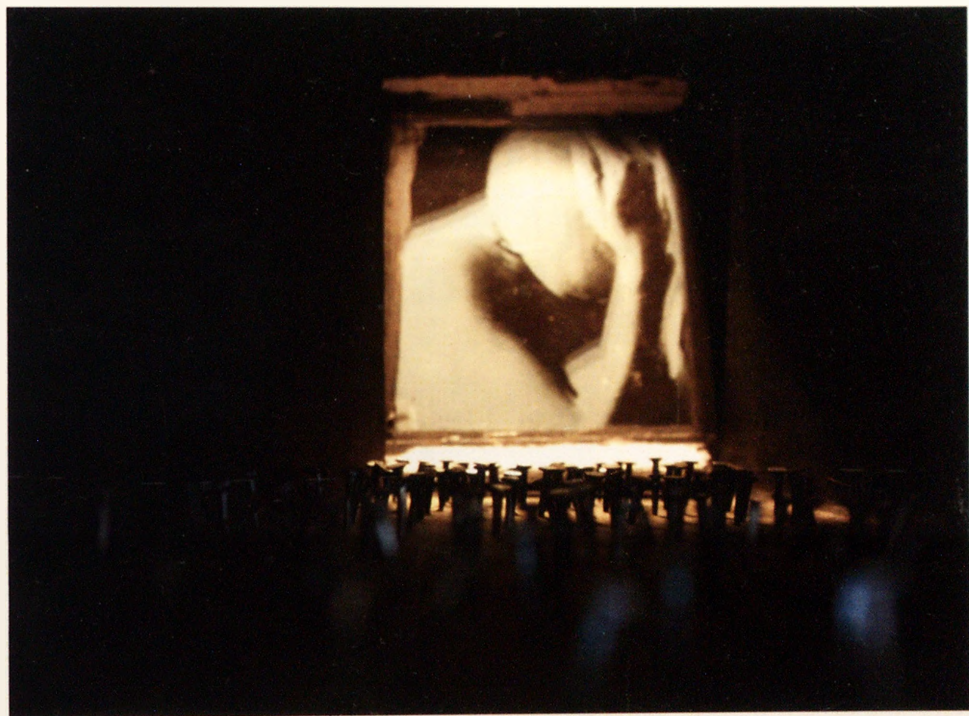
10.2. Box 2: *Déjame ser* (Let me Be)

Déjame ser studies the impediments to one woman's realization as a consequence of external restraints. Through the piece's only opening, one can observe a thoughtful subject lying in the back of the room. She looks anguished and meditative. Her journey through life seems prolonged and painful, as symbolized by the nails that perforate her existence.

Overwhelmed by these daunting circumstances, she submerges herself in her thoughts. The subject is cast in a ray of warm light. This light is what makes it possible to observe her message of praying for freedom.



Déjame ser, from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007-08, Miami.
(11" x 13" x 24" mixed media box)



Déjame ser, detail, from the *Laberintos del ser* installation.

10.3. Box 3: *Blue Room*

Blue Room is the only piece in the whole exhibition whose title was thought of and has remained in English. This can be attributed to a cultural influence, and the constant way my thoughts have been evolving over the years, making me gradually fluctuate from one language to the other.

This box displays various openings, through which one can appreciate different perspectives of its interior. At a first glance, one sees a blue room with a bed in which a woman is lying in solitude. Her image has been imprinted into the bed's white sheets.

The intentional reduction on the size of the bed symbolizes the relative insignificance of the self when confronted with external adversities.

The word blue utilized in the title not only refers to the room color, but to an emotional connotation of sadness and loneliness. This mournful room can also be interpreted as a pool, in which the woman has been drowned in her sleep by her own tears. A ladder has been located by the woman's bed, leading upward as a symbol of hope.



Blue Room, detail.



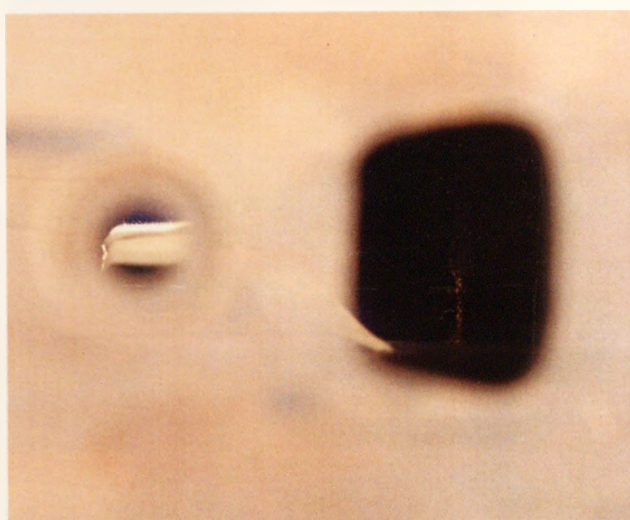
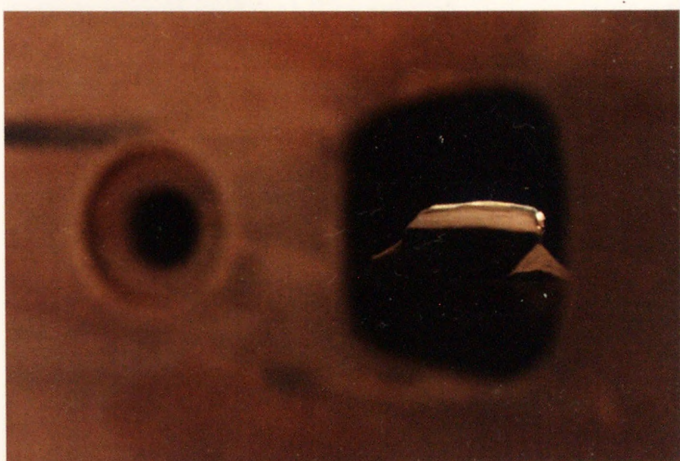
Blue Room from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007-08, Miami.

(11" x 13" x 20" mixed media box)



***Blue Room*, details.**





Blue Room, details.

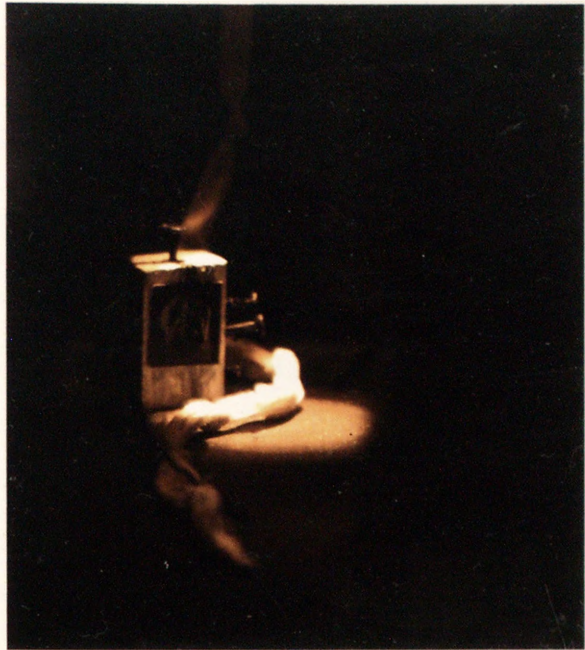
10.4 Box 4: Ansias de luz (Willing for Light)

Ansias de luz is literally the central box of the *Laberintos del ser* installation and the one with deepest dimensions.

Through its one large opening one can observe a dark and suffocating path, composed of irregular, overlapping strips of black burlap. A white strip of knotted fabric appears in the middle of that path, running towards the end of the tunnel and leading to the heavens. Next to this white strip and illuminated by a ray of light coming from above, a rectangular monument-like construction holds an image of a frightened woman standing between life and death.



Ansias de luz, from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007-08, Miami.
(11" x 13" x 27" mixed media box)



Ansias de luz, details.

10.5 Box 5: *Metáfora del blanco* (The Methaphor of White)

There is once more a single opening to observe this box's interior, situated at the front of the box, on the left side. This window has been intentionally designed to force the spectator to observe it with only one eye at a time; making it almost impossible to simultaneously focus on all of the elements within the interior of the piece. Furthermore, the viewer is forced to make constant visual readjustments in order to appreciate these components.

In the interior, one can observe a short black tunnel that serves as a vestibule for the woman's portrait. This image has been printed on a transparent film (ortho-litho film). The transparency allows one to see the arrangement of white, organic forms that compose the rear wall of the chamber. These forms represent white cells.



***Metáfora del blanco* from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007-08,
Miami.
(11" x 13 "x 22" mixed media box)**



Metáfora del blanco, detail while focusing at different elements.

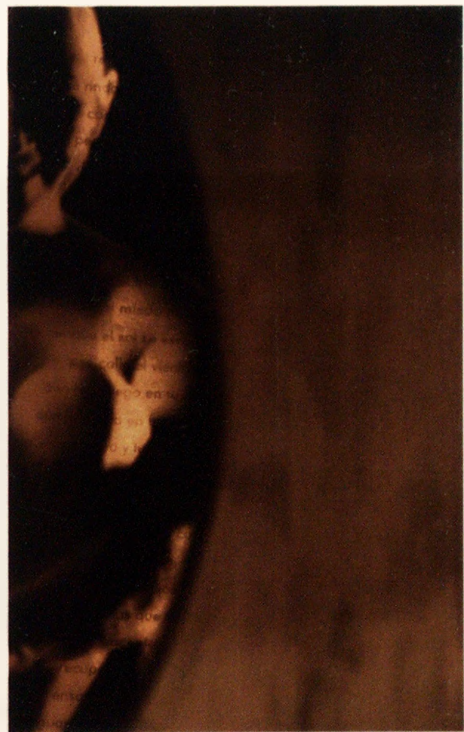
10.6. Box 6: *Abandonando las murallas* (Abandoning the Walls)

This piece was created in response to the poem, *No te rindas*, written by Mario Benedetti. The poem expresses the importance for an individual to never give up, to take risks and abandon those places of comfort where they have been standing for years, paralyzed by fear. The poem asks us to stand up for ourselves, and accept new challenges, to celebrate life and look for one's realization as an individual.

The interior of this chamber is filled with elements charged with symbolism, from a dead bird to a bottle with a message that floats in an ocean. It ultimately leads to an image of a smiling woman. On her back, one can see some of Benedetti's verses.



***Abandonando las murallas*, from *Laberintos del ser* installation,
2007- 08, Miami.
(11" x 13 "x 22" mixed media box)**



Abandonando las murallas, details.

10.7. Box 7: *Luz y blanco* (Light and White)

Luz y blanco is the seventh and final box of the installation. It consists of a white luminescent box that drapes a white piece of cloth over one of its corners. This gleaming box is the only piece of the exhibition that is devoid of an image. Its concept is open for the viewer's free interpretation.



***Luz y blanco*, from *Laberintos del ser* installation, 2007-08, Miami.
(11" x 13 "x 18" mixed media box)**

ARTIST STATEMENT / CONCLUSION

Although I think of myself as a Photographer, working with mixed media has found its way into my work. Incorporating new materials has helped me create a new imagery that liberates me from the confinements of more traditional photography. This new creative process allows each of my works to develop gradually, at their own pace, with their own rhythm. Each piece is a result of an internal process initiated by a particular event and shaped by the coexistence of emotions, feelings, reason and perception.

This body of work was inspired by a particular period of struggle in a woman's life with ongoing breast cancer, but its other stimuli also reside in the connection I have with different women that were close and influential to me throughout my life (a past that is sometimes blurred by time or repressed in the unconscious), and ultimately, to the connection I have made with my own self.

The work is about the constant search over the years for a woman's true identity, and the dichotomy between the physical and the spiritual. These pieces reflect over the present and an uncertain future, they speak about the struggles of life and the path of death and the search for enlightenment.

REFERENCES

- Bachelard, Gaston. The Poetics of Space, Beacon Press Books, Boston, MA, 1994.
- Barret, Terry. Criticizing Photographs. An Introduction to Understanding Images. Mc Graw Hill Co. Inc. , New York, NY, 2000.
- Brito, Maria. <<http://biography.jrank.org/pages/3800/Brito-Maria-1947-Painter-Sculptor.html>>Maria Brito: 1947—: Painter, Sculptor Biography
- . < <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=35817>
- Cirlot, J.E. A Dictionary of Symbols. Second Edition. Dover Publications Inc. Mineola NY, 2002.
- Conrad, Donna. Conversations with Ruth Bernhard - Photography Articles and Techniques, Photovision www.photovisionmagazine.com/articles/bernhard.interview.html.
- Cornell, Joseph. Artist Data: <<http://www.ndoylefineart.com/cornell.html>. ---. <<http://www.pem.org/cornell/>
- Feney, Mark. Ordinary becomes extraordinary. The Boston Globe, Nov. 2, 2007. < http://www.abelardomorell.net/pdf/M.Feeney_11_07.pdf

- Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Sixth ed. The Modern Language Association of America, New York, NY, 2007. <<http://www.mla.org>
- Gilles, Mora. Photospeak: a Guide to the Ideas, Movements and Techniques of Photography, 1939 to the Present, New York, NY: Abbeville Press, 1998.
- Grundberg, Andy. Mike and Doug Starn. Introduction by Robert Rosenblum. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, New York, NY, 1990.
- Gumpert, Lynn. Christian Boltanski, Flammarion, Paris, 1994.
- Knotz, Mary Lynn. Rauschenberg, Art and Life. New Edition, Harry N. Abrahams, Inc. Publishers, New York, NY, 2004.
- Martinez-Cañas, Maria. Artist web site <<http://www.mariamartinez-cañas.com>.
- . <<http://thefreelibrary.com/MARIA+MARTINEZ-CANAS-a057785676>.
- . <<http://www.saulgallery.com/Cañas/statement.html>.
- Martinez, Juan. U press
- <http://www.upress.umn.edu/books/M/martinez_maria.html
- Mitchell, Margaretta. Ten women of photography, Recollections, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA, 2000.
- . Ruth Bernhard: Between Art and life. Chronicle Books, San

Francisco, CA, 2000.

<<http://www.womeninphotography.org/ruthbernhardAA.html>.

-Morell, Abelardo. Monographs by Abelardo Merell. Introduction by

Richard Woodward. TF Editores, Spain. Phaidon Press, London,
2005.

---. Artist website: <<http://www.abelardomorell.index.html>.

-Rosenblum, Naomi. A World History of Photography (3rd Ed.) New
York, NY: Abeville Press Publishers, 2005.

-Sontag, Susan. Illness as Methaphor. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1978.

-Suarez de Jesus, Carlos. "Meeks Inherits." Miami New Times. Art Aug.
29th, Miami, 2007.

<[http://www.miaminewtimes.com/search/?keywords=meeks+inher
its&x=0&y=0](http://www.miaminewtimes.com/search/?keywords=meeks+inher
its&x=0&y=0)

-Tennin, Christine. "An eye for the unusual." New England Home
Magazine. July-Aug. 2007.

<http://www.abelardomorell/pdf/C.Tennin_07pdf.

-Taylor, Brandon. Collage, The Making Of Art. Thames and Hudson Inc,
New York, NY, 2004.

-Weissgall, Deboragh. "Where Child's Play and Just Plain Facts

Rendezvous on Film." The New York Times, Sunday Feb. 12,
1999. <http://www.abellardomorell/pdf/D.Weisgel_99pdf.