

stitution during what could have otherwise been an awkward period. Rather than critical commentary it seemed to be more pragmatic and optimistic, and if its effects derived in large part from the purely formal and a sense of spectacle, it reminded us that sometimes with art that can be enough.

John Angeline

Marta Chilindrón

Cecilia de Torres Gallery

Marta Chilindrón's most recent exhibition coincides with the publication of a monograph of her oeuvre, covering her entire career. The sculptures on display at the Cecilia de Torres Gallery are so current and fresh, that it is hard to believe that the artist has been active since the 1970s and that she began her career as a realist painter. Nevertheless, as the catalogue makes abundantly clear, the artist's work is both consistent and coherent, following a lifelong exploration of perspective, perception, and the body. The exhibition both reassures and surprises. It consists of acrylic and twin-wall polycarbonate hinged sculptures, representational and abstract, that reference geometry and nature. The pieces drawn from life evoke organic forms—a cloud, grass, flames, water—while those that are abstract refer to nature more obliquely, through their reliance on the golden section. Together, the sculptures form a colorful grouping that is both visually arresting and thought provoking. Their shiny, modulated surfaces invite us to play while also challeng-

ing received assumptions on the representation of nature.

To a public familiar with Chilindrón's works, the appearance of organic forms is an unexpected departure from a visual language that for years has sustained a rigorous exploration of geometry. The artist's most characteristic shapes are squares, circles, triangles, and other basic forms that become the building blocks of ever-more complex compositions that unfold in time and space. Her new sculptures are structurally similar to the geometric work in that they mostly consist of two-dimensional planes hinged together so that they may be folded closed or opened up. Thus, *Fire* (2010) closed up resembles a large red bonfire while unfolded suggests an unstoppable conflagration. *Grass* (2010) could represent a small hill or ever growing and multiplying blades of grass. Both of these pieces, however, rely on irregular shapes to create new points of visual interest. Their unpredictability calls attention to the fact that nature is always in flux, its forms never fixed. The shapes described in *Water* (2011), however, are strangely regular. Repeating arcs that resemble a child's drawing describe waves, but with each layer, the arcs become smaller, so that big flowing waves in the front give way to a tight repeating pattern in the back. Despite its regularity, the piece succeeds in maintaining visual interest through the shifts in scale as well as variations between translucency and opacity of the material. Among the sculptures describing nature, *Cloud* (2009) departs from the planar composition of the others. Hanging from the ceiling, it

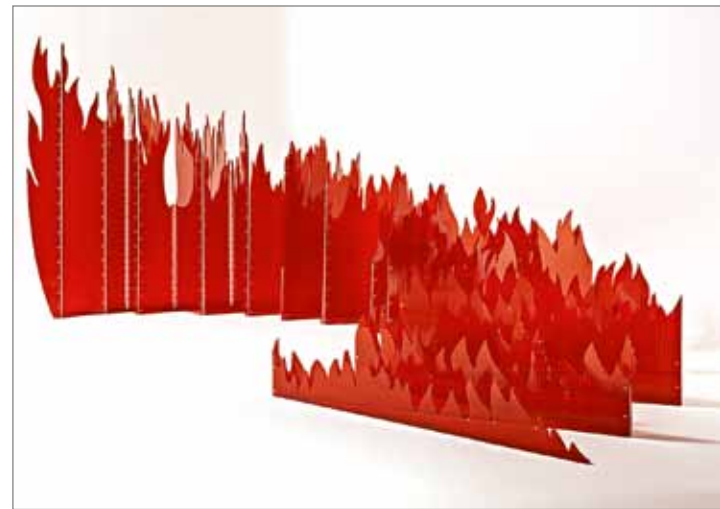
hinges in places while allowing empty space to penetrate in others, managing to capture the immateriality of the cloud with the most unexpected of materials.

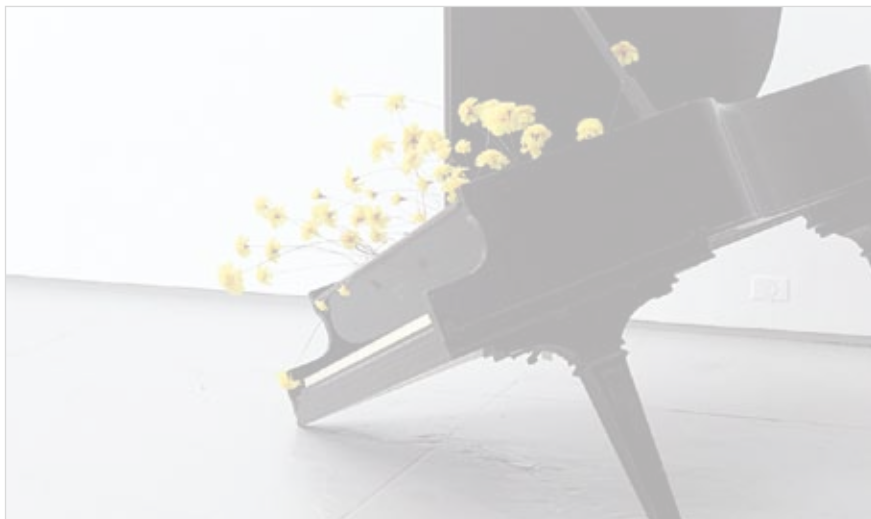
As a counterpoint to the organic works, the artist also includes a series of abstract geometric sculptures. Contrasting the colors of nature are the bubblegum pink and fluorescent orange of *27 Triangles* (2011). As a static object, the sculpture is very compelling, offering a complex composition of hinged equilateral triangles in two colors: orange and white. The orange appears pink from certain angles, adding to the visual interest of the piece. For the viewer who has the privilege of handling the sculpture, *27 Triangles* has more to offer. Though the colors appear interconnected, each of the colored strands folds onto itself to create a single triangle. Through a few movements a complex form becomes the paragon of simplicity. Two other works, *Helix* (2011) and *Spiral-Green* (2011), also demand to be manipulated in order to be fully appreciated. When closed, *Helix* consists of repeating wedges in blue and clear acrylic, interspersed at what appear to be random intervals but which actually follow the Fibonacci series. This is a sequence of numbers that adds up to the two previous numbers (0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13...); as the numbers progress, the ratio between them stays constant, a phenomenon known as the golden section and which occurs in such natural elements as the nautilus seashell, flower petals, and pinecones. In *Helix*, not only do the wedges follow this pattern, but when opened up, the blue and clear bands of acrylic come apart, and each

Nicola López. *Landscape X: Under Construction*, 2011. Installation view. Photo: David Heald © Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.



Marta Chilindrón. *Fire*, 2011. Polycarbonate twin wall. 57 3/4 x 47 x 17 in. (147 x 120 x 43 cm.).





Glenda León. *Magical Found Object #5*, 2005-2011. Artificial flowers, piano. 69 x 68 ½ x 69 in. (175.3 x 174 x 175.3 cm.).

may be folded into a perfect circle. The piece evokes a similar sense of wonderment as *Spiral-Green*, a larger structure that upright consists of a series of wedges increasing in size sequentially, but that may be folded flat into the shape of a spiral, the quintessential expression of the golden section. It is worth seeking out a series of videos, posted on YouTube and on the gallery website, to witness the activation of these and other pieces. If one pays close attention, it may be possible to recreate the artist's engaging constructions at home.

Tatiana Flores

Glenda Leon

Magnan Metz Gallery

A huge piano lies sideways sprouting flowers in the middle of the main gallery at Magnanmetz Gallery in Chelsea. The visual impact is very strong for this vehicle of Glenda León's dialogue with music, which is the theme of the entire exhibition. This object in particular is designated as a "found" object, which adds to the allure of the piece; but we are more directly engaged with the image of the intervention of nature upon the man-made musical instrument, the unexpected beauty of contrast and its suggestive, evocative projection that captures our visual space and takes a firm hold of our mind with numerous suggested possibilities of interpretation or discourse.

A definite relationship to sound is given visual expression in the works presented, which range in size from small drawings to

the one-room-sized video installation in the back of the gallery that projects a view of the stars accompanied by an uncanny melody coming out of an old-fashioned music box. Yet the representation had nothing of the ridiculous, kitsch or outright representational, and is instead an interpretation, or more accurately, a poetic translation of the visual image into sound.

Glenda León's world of musical representation and allegory poignantly underlines the silence that involves the observation of artworks in a gallery. Conceptually, the artist is using this silence to direct the attention to the possibilities of sound and music that are evoked in the pieces. Her art work often depicts the musical scales, but with integrated images that project a mood very similar to what is experienced while listening to a musical piece. There was one piece that illustrates the above: fallen leaves trapped in the lines of music, was aptly entitled "Listening to Autumn"; in another the scale lines are covered with water drops and we see a cloudy landscape in the background, evoking a similarly melancholy textured message.

There is another aspect in which the artwork recalls the power of music that comes from its emphasis on meditation. By focusing on the possibilities of something that is suggested—but never actually heard—the artist is making us aware of the possibilities of visually imagining an added connection/perception through the sense of hearing. This also reminds us of the importance of taking time to listen, comprehend and absorb, underlining the rushed circumstances that accompany most listening or viewing experi-

ences of contemporary life that are too often heavily charged with subtexts and competing discourses from other sources in the sidelines, and that oftentimes are heavily derived from the cacophonous world of the Internet.

Glenda's meditation on musical possibilities for the eyes is a welcoming opener to alternative appreciation, and the enduring rewards of meditated purpose.

Alberto Barral

Carlos Motta

Y Gallery

The gaze of those arriving in the gallery is captured by a screen that floats in the middle of a dimly lit room. Darkness overcomes the space, interrupted solely by the light of the two-faceted video and by five small candle holders placed on top of small desks arranged in a single corner. Each one of them arouses in us memories of those monastic scriptoria so often seen in religious paintings throughout history. These desks are allegorical of the religious track followed by the artist in this exhibition. On the surface we find three wooden puzzles with scenes alluding to the topic and title: *Deus Pobre: Modern Sermons of Communal Lament*. Carlos Motta is the author of this video installation in two channels, where light and sound establish the central discourse while photography and wood contribute stage-setting elements of action and intention. The seemingly simple exhibition is in actuality rather complex in its structure of pairs and historical and social references.

Carlos Motta (Bogotá, 1978) lives and works in New York City. He is a multidisciplinary artist who seeks to establish parameters of historical rectification towards the oppressed of Latin America. The basic elements of his narrative concept are film, documentarianism, historical memory, political history, associations, and a reading that courses through time. This video installation was commissioned and partly produced by the Museu Serralves, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Portuguese Republic. Motta planned and executed the work in Portugal, filming a series of performative interventions in Catholic churches in different cities. The result are six videos organized in pairs of thematic correspondence or geographic doublings in a quest for social equity. The videos are set in Europe and Latin America. One channel presents the priests' in