

Bruguera's installation in a tunnel at La Fortaleza formerly used as a penitentiary cell, *Untitled (2000)*, was even more conceptually stunning. You entered at one end of a guarded, cavelike space that emitted a powerful odor of fermentation; the floor was covered with layers of bagazo, milled sugarcane, which made each step difficult. Disoriented by the darkness, the smell, and the effort of walking/trudging, you were drawn toward a blue light emanating from the hard-to-discern distance that turned out to be a television screen, silently projecting looped video images of Fidel Castro in what are for Cubans famous scenes of their "maximum leader" displaying his heroism and humanity. Only on looking back from the end of the tunnel could you see that you were being watched by men--nonprofessional actors from Bruguera's neighborhood--standing naked in two rows of two and making a series of repetitive gestures: One bowed rhythmically; another rubbed himself as if trying frantically to remove a taint (like the Lady Macbeth figure in Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood*). The effect of seeing their silhouettes in conjunction with the video was astonishingly powerful. It was as though Bruguera were presenting a philosophy of (national) history, in which people journey through a collective experience that can only be comprehended once they've reached its end, whereupon "the past" reveals itself as having consisted of repeated rituals and empty gestures. Bruguera's installation drew so many visitors that it was featured on the evening news. The next day, the actors were not allowed to participate. (Bruguera surreptitiously recorded the performance on video.)