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Social Activist Tania Bruguera Brings Arte Útil to NYC

June 1, 2016 by Renee Phillips — [Leave a Comment](#)



Tania Bruguera, Untitled (Havana, 2000), 2000. Video performance installation. Milled sugar cane, black and white monitor, Cubans, DVD disc, DVD player. Dimensions variable. From Tania Bruguera: On the Political Imaginary is the first survey of the artist's interdisciplinary work focusing on the relationship among art, politics, and life, exhibition at the Neuberger Museum of Art.

Tania Bruguera was born in 1968 in Havana, Cuba. She studied at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana and then earned an M.F.A. in performance from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is internationally recognized as a politically motivated performance artist who explores the relationship between art, activism, and social change. Her works examine the social effects of political and economic power. She collaborates with multiple institutions as well as many individuals so that the full realization of her artwork occurs when others adopt and perpetuate it.

Tania Bruguera has brought awareness about Arte Útil (useful art) which proposes solutions to sociopolitical problems through the implementation of art. She has been teaching and researching the subject of Arte Útil for a decade through an academy in Havana; the Arte Útil lab at Queens Museum, residencies at Immigrant Movement International, New York, and the Museum of Arte Útil. She recently received a one-year Artist-in-Residence from Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) in New York, NY.

What is Arte Útil ?

Arte Útil employs art to develop new methods of addressing pressing social and political issues. According to the Museum of Arte Util museumartutil.net, “Whether through self-organised groups, individual initiatives or the rise of user generated content people are developing new methods and social formations to deal with issues that were once the domain of the state. Arte Útil case studies show how these initiatives are not isolated incidents, but part of a global movement shaping our contemporary world.”

What is The Criteria for Arte Útil?

Tania Bruguera and curators at the Queens Museum, New York, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven and Grizedale Arts, Coniston have established the following criteria for what constitutes Arte Util:

- * Propose new uses for art within society
- * Challenge the field within which it operates (civic, legislative, pedagogical, scientific, economic, etc)
- * Be ‘timing specific’, responding to current urgencies
- * Be implemented and function in real situations
- * Replace authors with initiators and spectators with users
- * Have practical, beneficial outcomes for its users
- * Pursue sustainability whilst adapting to changing conditions
- * Re-establish aesthetics as a system of transformation

“The art that we should be doing today in the 21st century is art that is not for the museum, it’s art for the street and people’s lives.” -Tania Bruguera

Bruguera’s Artist-in-Residence in NYC

Tania Bruguera will serve as an artist-in-residence for one year at MOIA. The approach to her residency will be based on the artist’s practice of Arte Útil. She will work with Immigrant Movement International (IM International), a participatory artwork she initiated in collaboration with Queens Museum and Creative Time that functions as a community space in the immigrant-rich neighborhood of Corona, Queens.

Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl stated “I have been inspired by Tania Bruguera’s vision for art as something that can propose real, tangible solutions for the people involved since I met her 15 years ago.” He added “I am enormously excited to support her work that uses art to forge a new model for enhancing our public services through creative practice.”

Bruguera Is Excited to Collaborate with NYC’s Immigrant Communities

Tania Bruguera expressed her feelings about her Artist-in-Residence: “I’m excited to explore new ways of collaborating with New York’s immigrant communities to make a real impact on the lives of city residents.” She also stated, “This project provides a unique opportunity to enhance the notion of art as a useful tool to materialize a vision of a more inclusive society.”

Visit Tania Bruguera’s website: <http://www.taniabruquera.com/>

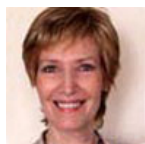
Visit the Museum of Arte Útil’s website: <http://museumarteutil.net>

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About Renee Phillips

Renée Phillips is an author, arts writer, and curator who lives in New York, NY. She is founder and director of Manhattan Arts International www.ManhattanArts.com, and executive editor of The Healing Power of ART & ARTISTS. She has curated more than 60 art exhibitions including the annual “The Healing Power of Art” exhibitions. As an arts' advocate she has served on the advisory boards of several non-profit arts organizations. She is a member of the International Association of Art Critics. She runs an artists' career consultant website at www.renee-phillips.com. Renée operated Manhattan Arts International magazine 1983 - 2000. She studied art at the Art Student's League in NYC.

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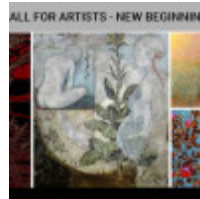
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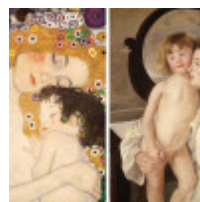
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