

PRESS RELEASE

VIDAS PARALELAS

MICHEL PÉREZ POLLO + PASCALE MARTHINE TAYOU

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11TH, 2022

ARTE CONTINUA – ÁGUILA DE ORO, RAYO 108 BETWEEN ZANJA AND DRAGONES, BARRIO CHINO, CENTRO HABANA, CUBA

Arte Continua is pleased to present VIDAS PARALELAS, an exhibition by the Cuban artist Michel Pérez Pollo and the Cameroonian artist Pascale Marthine Tayou.

The pieces on show create possible universes that question reality and our perception of it. They guide the viewer's attention to unexpected objects and invite them to appreciate them with novel approaches; they have been given an imagined life, full of suggestions and questions. They are colorful and playful worlds that offer a peculiar redemption.

Many of the works by Pérez Pollo present in the exhibition belong to the *Perspectivas* series. They propose impossible optics of unrecognizable three-dimensional objects which absorb the attention of the public in the rational attempt to decipher their shape and identify the angle from which they are presented to us. They bring up questions common to other series of their author: How do you create an image of something that does not exist, in a way that cannot be built even in the mind? Or is it that everything can exist there, even without us being aware of it? What exists in reality and what in our consciousness?

The piece by Tayou has been specifically conceived for this space. The author feels a special affection for Cuba, so much so that he has dedicated a cascade of stone petals to the country. Each fragment is unique: one of the surfaces has been painted with a distinctive tone. For Tayou, color has several levels of significance. He celebrates life through its very presence and allows it to change his mood, like taking a vitamin. At the same time, he uses it as a vehicle through which to talk about diversity and inclusion. For him, it is a space for joy as much as a language for activism. The contrast between the rugged matter and the colorful surfaces allows him to allude to the challenges, contradictions and struggles that humanity has gone through for the sake of prosperity and growth: "The life that we all lead is enveloped by a terrifying darkness. So one always has to have the courage to bring out the light"*.

* Pascale Marthine Tayou, on an interview by Louise Hauerberg in 2016.

Michel Pérez Pollo preferred painting at a time when his context had relegated it. He was part of a small group of artists who—with pieces of great conceptual firmness and often strong metaphysical content—reversed prejudice and distrust towards the medium. The abstract-figurative duality that gives his works a unique character, is the ideal language to raise universal questions. In the last two decades he has exhibited in prestigious local and international venues (including the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Cuba, the Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst in Germany and the Museo Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Spain).

From the early 1990s **Pascale Marthine Tayou** has been a major artist on the international scene, with his participation in Documenta 11 in Kassel (2002) and in the Venice Biennale (2005 and 2009). His work shows great diversity, because he does not confine himself to either a medium or a particular issue. The quality shared by all the objects, sculptures, installations, drawings and videos produced by Pascale Marthine Tayou is their interest in the individual, exploring the question of the global village, always beginning with the artist and his own story, questioning his African origins and the expectations related to them.

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