

JOSÉ MANUEL FORS

José Manuel Fors is one of the defining figures of the generation that reshaped contemporary Cuban art in the early 1980s. Born in Havana in 1956, he developed a practice that moved from painting and photography toward installation, object-making, and photo-based assemblage.

Emerging from the Volumen I generation and later exhibiting in Havana, Los Angeles, New York, Paris, Madrid, Brussels, and Tokyo, Fors built an international career grounded in memory, absence, accumulation, and the unstable status of evidence.

Across installations, photographs, books, leaves, ceramics, and found fragments, he has sustained a language in which autobiography and collective history remain inseparable. His work remains central to any serious account of contemporary Cuban art.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 Candies: Homage to Félix González-Torres, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
- 2017 Palimpsesto, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
- 2012 Pormenores (Details), 11th Havana Biennial, Morro-Cabaña Park, Pavilion D5, Havana, Cuba
- 2011 Fragmentos (Fragments), Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
- 2008 Objetos (Objects), La Casona Gallery, Havana, Cuba
- 2006 Objetos fotográficos (Photographic Objects), Auditorium of Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
Historias circulares (Circular Stories), Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
Círculos (Circles), Fototeca de Cuba, Havana, Cuba
- 2005 Boy Cott Art Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2004 Las cartas (The Letters), Casa de las Américas, Galería Latinoamericana, Havana, Cuba
Largas cartas (Long Letters), Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2003 Los objetos (The Objects), Geukens & De Vil Contemporary Art, Knokke-Zoute, Belgium
- 2002 Fallen Leaves, Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2001 Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore, USA
Beyond Cuba, Mirages of Absence, with Rogelio López Marín (Gory), Beadleston Gallery, New York, USA
- 2000 Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 1999 José Manuel Fors, Cuban Photographer, Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 1997 Los retratos (The Portraits), Morro Fortress, 6th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
Las ventanas (The Windows), La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba
Verso Photo Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1996 Hojarasca. Proyecto el voluble rostro de la realidad (Dead Leaves. The Changeable Face of Reality),
Fototeca de Cuba / Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, Havana, Cuba
- 1995 El paso del tiempo, proyecto naturalezas conjuradas, Centro Wifredo Lam, Havana, Cuba
- 1993 Desde la tierra (From the Earth), II Jornada Fotográfica de Mérida, La Otra Banda Gallery, Mérida,
Venezuela
- 1992 Trabajos fotográficos (Photographic Works), Fototeca de Cuba, Havana, Cuba
- 1988 La tierra (The Earth), Centro Provincial de Artes Plásticas y Diseño, Havana, Cuba
Golpes de vista (At First Glance), Museo Provincial, Villa Clara, Cuba
- 1983 Acumulaciones (Accumulations), Casa de la Cultura de Plaza, Havana, Cuba

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 La Habana Hoy, Artes de Cuba, Miami, USA
¿Y esa luz? Es tu sombra - A Symphony of Lights and Shadows, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
- 2023 Text / Image, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
Tesoros de la Bóveda, Artes de Cuba, Miami, USA
- 2015 Apertura: Photography in Cuba Today, Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, USA
Lens Work: Celebrating LACMA's Experimental Photography at 50, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA
- 2013 A Sense of Place, Pier 24 Photography, San Francisco, USA
Art Wynwood, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
- 2012 Estado actual. Muestra colectiva de las vanguardias cubanas, La Acacia Gallery, Havana, Cuba
Las metáforas del cambio, Factoría Habana, collateral 11th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 2011 Urbanitas, Pan American Art Projects, Miami, USA
Cuban Connections Near and Far, MACLA, San José, USA
Cuba in Focus, Foothill College, KCI Gallery, Los Altos Hills, USA
- 2010 Cuba Avant-Garde: Arte Contemporáneo Cubano de la Colección Farber, Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Coral Gables, USA
Encuentros, Sala Retiro, Caja Madrid, Madrid, Spain
- 2008 Surrounded by Water: Expression of Freedom and Isolation in Contemporary Cuban Art, Boston University Art Gallery, Boston, USA
Cuba. Art and History from 1868 to Today, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada
- 2007 Cuba Avant-Garde: Contemporary Cuban Art from the Farber Collection, Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, USA
Cuba Avant-Garde: Contemporary Cuban Art from the Farber Collection, Ringling Museum, Sarasota, USA
Homing Devices, Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, USA
- 2006 Arte de Cuba, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2005 Documenting Poetry: Contemporary Latin American Photography, Maier Museum of Art, Lynchburg, USA
En blanco y negro. Fotografía cubana contemporánea, San Lucas 9 Gallery, Madrid, Spain
- 2004 No Island is an Island: Contemporary Cuban Art, Sawhill Gallery, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, USA
- 2003 Contemporary Art and the Art of Survival, Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery, San José State University, San José, USA
- 2002 Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography after the Revolution, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, USA
Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography after the Revolution, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA
Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography after the Revolution, Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York, USA

- 1998 ¿Cómo es posible ser cubano?, Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France
Empreintes Cubaines, Théâtre National de Chaillot, Paris, France
- 1995 Visioni, Cuban Photography from the Nineties, Spazio Italia, Milan, Italy
- 1993 Plástica Cubana Contemporánea de los Ochenta, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, Mexico
- 1991 4th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 1989 3rd Havana Biennial, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
- 1986 2nd Havana Biennial, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba
- 1981 Volumen I, Centro de Arte Internacional, Havana, Cuba

SELECTED BIENNIALS

- 2012 11th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 2000 IX Fotobienal de Vigo, Vigo, Spain
- 1997 6th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 1991 4th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 1989 3rd Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
- 1986 2nd Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba

AWARDS

- 2016 Premio Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Cuba
- 2011 Award of the Biennial of Ceramic Containers 2011, Havana, Cuba
- 2007 Special Teaching Category of Consultant Professor, Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana, Cuba
- 2001 Diploma to Artistic Merit, Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), Havana, Cuba
- 1999 Distinction for National Culture, Ministry of Culture, Havana, Cuba
- 1989 Gold Medal, 49th International Photographic Salon of Japan, Tokyo, Japan

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana, Cuba.
- Casa de las Américas, Havana, Cuba.
- Fototeca de Cuba, Havana, Cuba.
- MOCA - Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA.

- Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA.
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA.
- Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, USA.
- University of Virginia Art Museum, Charlottesville, USA.
- Fundación Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela.
- Museo Las Américas, Managua, Nicaragua.
- CNAP - Consejo Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Havana, Cuba.
- The Pilara Foundation, San Francisco, USA.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- José Manuel Fors. Arte Cubano Ediciones, Havana, 2016.
- Apertura: Photography in Cuba Today. Edited by Kirstin Pires; Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, 2015.
- A Sense of Place. Pier 24 Photography, San Francisco, 2013.
- Cincuenta Artistas Plásticos Cubanos. Ediciones Unión / UNEAC, Havana, 2002.
- Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography after the Revolution. Los Angeles County Museum of Art / Grey Art Gallery, 2001.