

UNFATHOMABLE

RAFAEL BARRIOS



artsawa

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ART SAWA DIFC
11 NOVEMBER – 14 DECEMBER 2013

UNFATHOMABLE

Rafael was born on November 22, 1947 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to Venezuelan parents.

Rafael Barrios' work has been characterized from the beginning by the alteration of the observers' perceptive mental state, manipulating form with the intention of dislocating our convictions about what we believe to see. Barrios creates a territory where the laws of gravity do not exist, one in which objects rise freely over themselves and where volume moves into space. With this, he destroys our false beliefs about what is possible and we question our ties to that which is terrestrial.

Barrios has been recognized as one of the most revolutionary contemporary Latin American artists and creator of Virtualism, a movement that he himself describes as: "the creation of visually participative pieces and in the creation of dislocating events in our perception. Volume is virtually modified in form, depending on distance, the shifting position of the observer and the changes in light throughout the day".

Rafael Barrios is a sculptor considered one of the mayor exponents of Latin American geometric art. His work is based on the alteration of our perceptive mental state, manipulating shapes with the purpose of dislocating our convictions of what we believe we are seeing, considering himself a generator of existential circumstances. Sculpture is the discipline he chooses to subject the observer into discovering a broader relation of his Universe, thus establishing new rules in the game of perception.

Of its many forms, Barrios' oeuvre includes the creation of large-scale pieces for public spaces, where virtuality is magnified to monumental dimensions and urban contexts, transforming the space into a new visual experience.

His childhood and elementary education took place in Venezuela where he studied, from an early age, drawing and art at the Museo de Bellas Artes in Caracas. At only 16 years of age, Rafael obtains a national award granted to young artists- Premio Nacional de Pintura Juvenil.

His passion for art and undeniable talent allow him to complete his education at Ashbury College

In Ottawa, Canada, with a mention in art, he is then granted a scholarship from J. Walter Thompson International to study Pure Art, Communication and Design at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto, Canada, from which he graduated with honors. He later completed a postgraduate degree in Fine Arts and Monumental Techniques with a scholarship at New York University.

During his almost 40 years of artistic career, Barrios has participated in more than 100 exhibits, both solo and collective, in some of the most important art centers in the United States, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. His impressive works are found in permanent collections at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Carmmen Lammana Foundation in Toronto, Canada, as well as the Sofía Imber Contemporary Art Museum in Caracas, Venezuela. In addition, his sculptures are amongst important private collections such as the King of Spain, Don Juan Carlos de Borbón, and Princess Gloria Von Thurn Und Taxis of Germany.

He has been commissioned numerous pieces to be integrated in important urban spaces such as: Art et Industrie and the Coca-Cola International headquarters both in New York; Philippe Stark's Murano Grande building and Sunny Isles park in Miami; the Fontanilla park in Puerto de Palos, Spain; the headquarters of the Caracas Metro, the Sofía Imber Contemporary Art Museum, CorpBanca headquarters, Procter & Gamble International headquarters, Polar Foundation, Seguros de Venezuela building and the Interlúmina headquarters in Puerto Ordaz, all in Venezuela, amongst others.

Barrios has received recognition from important national and international awards, amongst which are: McLean Foundation Scholarship, Ontario College of Art's highest award; Condecoración de la Excelentísima Diputado Provincial de la Frontera granted by Spain for his sculpture "Tercer Horizonte" in commemoration of the 500 years of the discovery of the Americas; II Premio de la Bienal de Artes Visuales awarded by the Contemporary Art Museum in Caracas, Venezuela; Premio Conferry de la I Bienal de la Escultura awarded by the Francisco Narváez Contemporary Art Museum in Venezuela; and the Premio Escultura Ernesto Avellán, also in Venezuela. In his integral career as an artist, Barrios has also taken on positions as Art Director for UNESCO; professor of 3D and Advertising Design at the Instituto Newmann in Venezuela; Creative Consultant for cinematographic projects; and set designer for Vogue and Esquire magazines, the Venezuelan Egroup Danza Hoy during Expo Sevilla 92, and for the renown French fashion designer Hervé Leger.

Barrios' monumental pieces have been installed around the world- in his native Venezuela a total of 15 sculptures grace public spaces; the city of Sunny Isles, FL commissioned a 6 meter structure specifically designed to withstand hurricanes; in Spain, in commemoration of the 500 years of the discovery of the Americas, yet another 8 meter tall piece stands in the port from which Columbus departed. In March of 2012, Barrios was honored by the Fund for Park Avenue to exhibit 9 monumental works along Park Avenue in New York, gracing the avenue for 4 months and gaining international recognition.

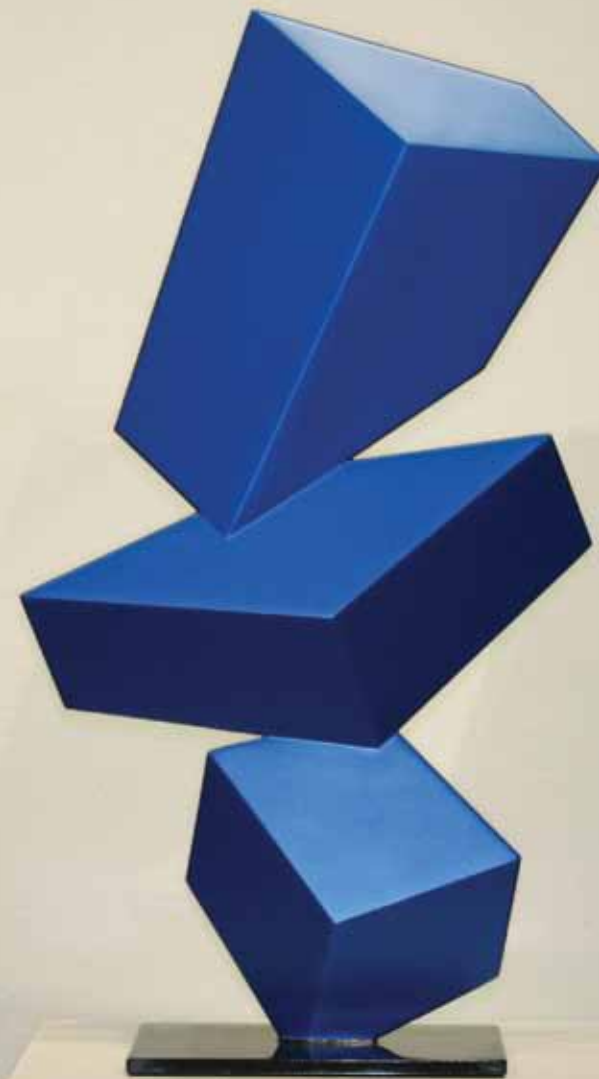


Obtuse

Opal Red, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 345 x L 170 x W 25 cm, 2013



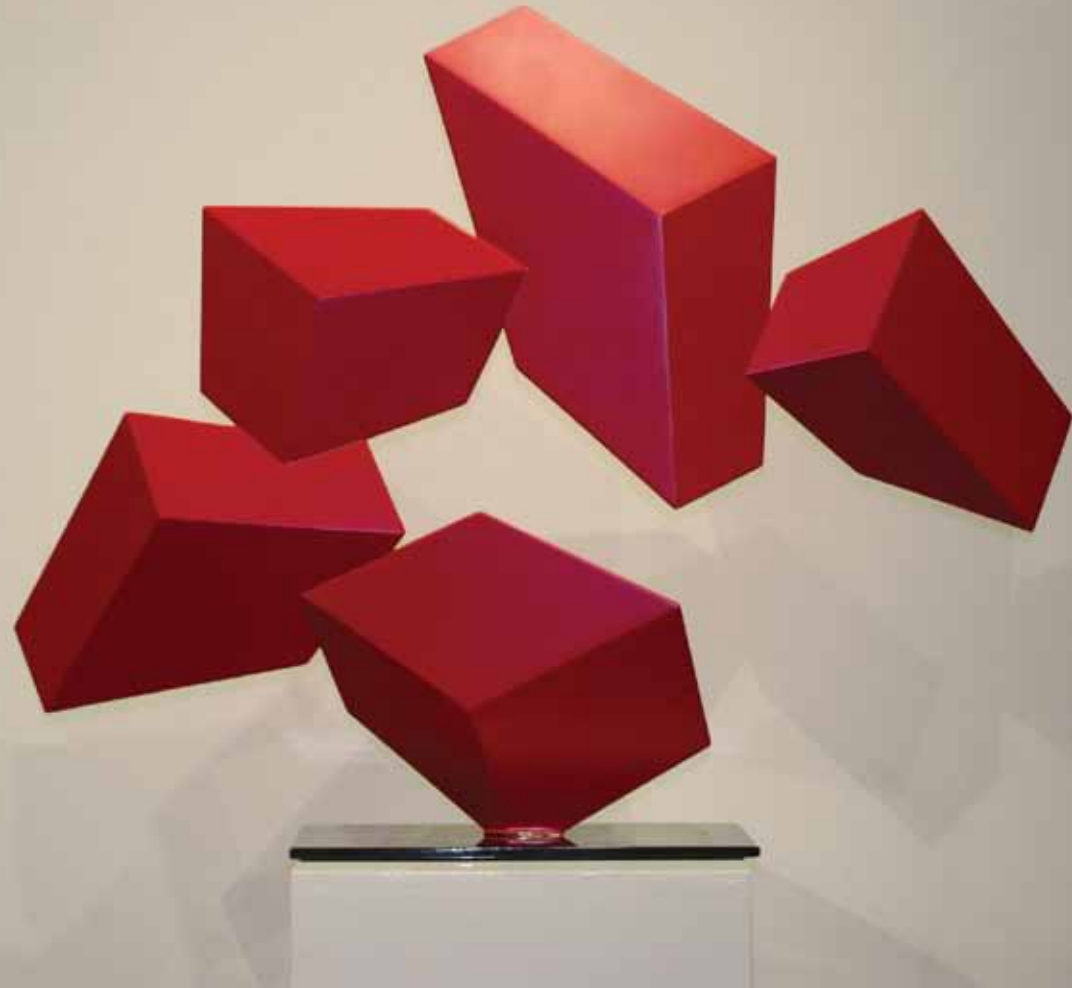
VOL
Morado Violeta, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 46 x L 66 x W 8 cm, A.P, 2013



BASCULÉE
Iridescent Blue, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 56 x L 31 x W 5 cm, 4/4, 2013



NIMBUS
White Pearl, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 81 x L 48 x W 7 cm, 2/4, 2013



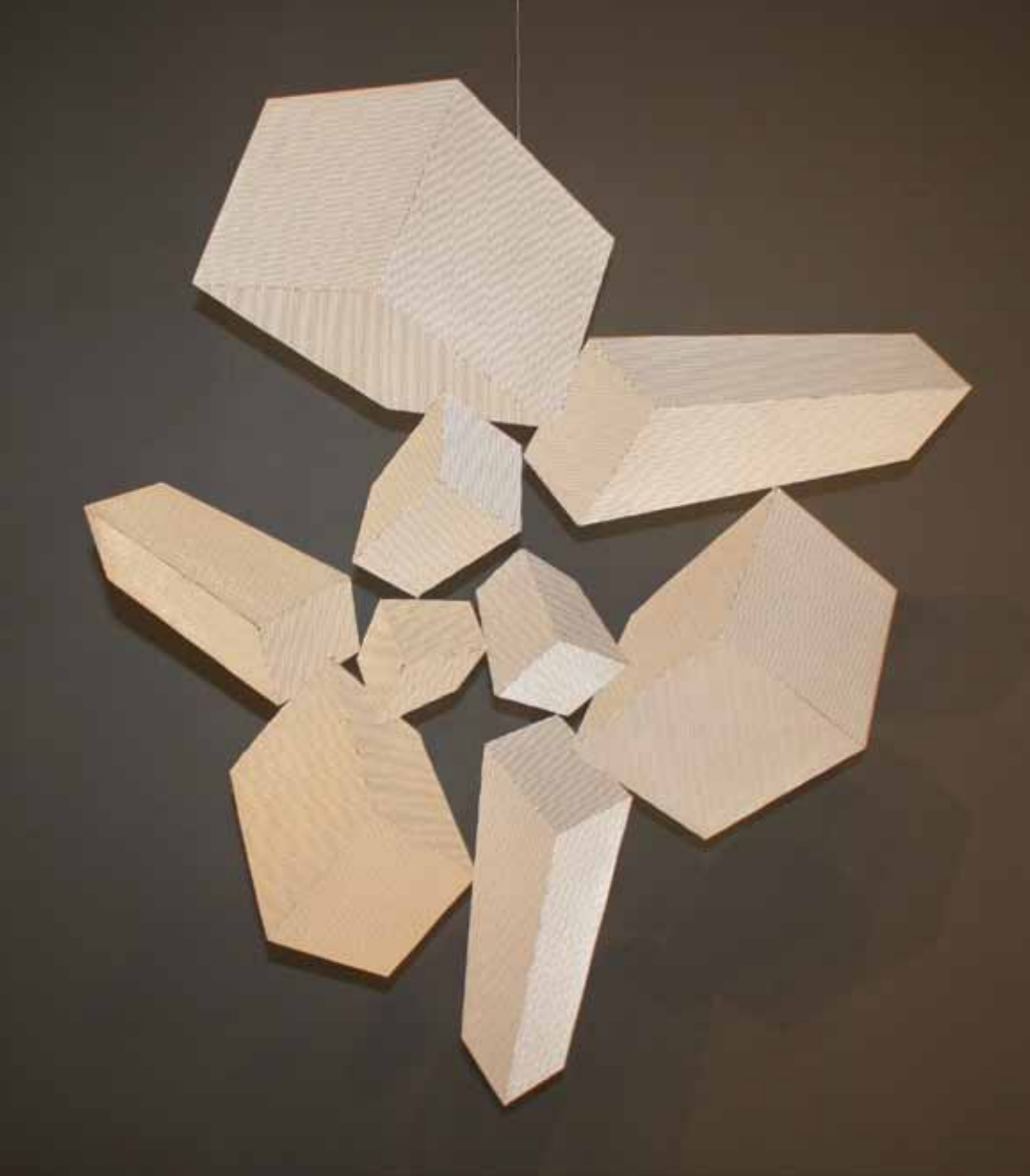
VOLÉ
Opal Red, Hand Made Lacquered Steel , H 64 x L 81 x W 8 cm, 2/2, 2013



NIMBUS RASANTE
Iridescent Blue, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 80 x L 45 x W 5 cm, 1/3, 2013



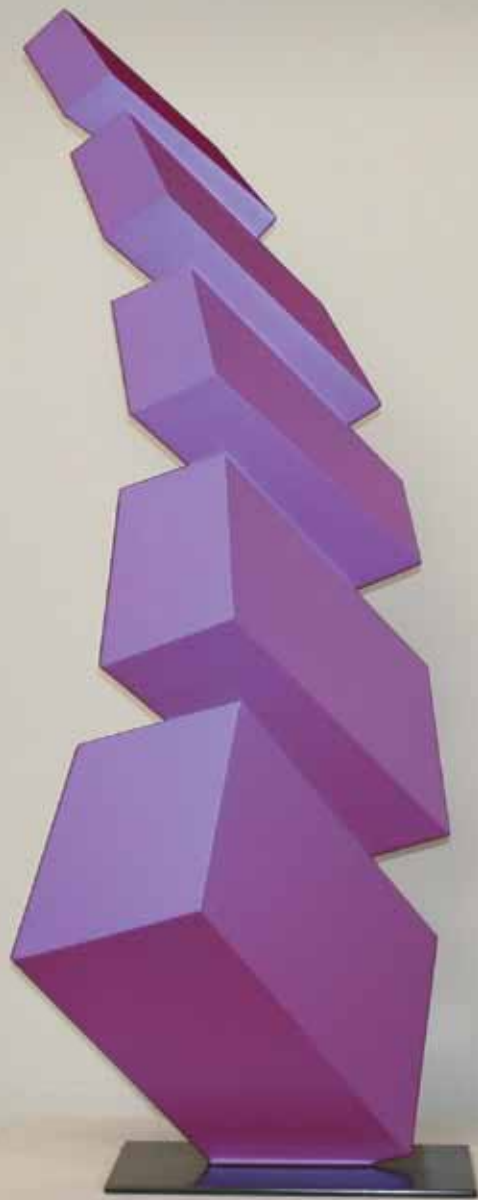
APOCALIPSIS LEVITANTE
Opalescent Magenta, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 79 x L 44 x W 6 cm , 5/5, 2013



TAPIZ
Silver, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 100 x L 80 cm, 1/3, 2010



MOBILE
Opal Red, Hand Made Lacquered Steel H 115 x L 130 cm, A.P, 2000



NIMBUS ASCENDENTE
Opalescent Magenta, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 150 x L 56 x W 10 cm, 2/4, 2013



MALABRISMO LINEAL
Gray, Hand Made Lacquered Steel, H 42 x L 48 x W 5 cm, 2/5, 2013

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How were you first exposed to art? (Through family, school, etc.)

My first exposure was as very young child at home. My mother's friends were artists, poets, dancers, philosophers, eccentrics and her home was always decorated with many works of art.

Tell us about your educational background, as well as your personal background (Where were you born, grew up, lived etc.)

I was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and was raised in Venezuela, Canada and the US. As a child I was enrolled in art classes on Saturdays at the museum of modern art in Caracas, but it was my mother that first taught me to draw. I also worked with a car mechanic at one point and learned about motors and mechanisms. I formally studied art at the Ontario College of Art, where I graduated with a degree in Communication and Design, as well as obtaining a Fine Art degree. For my Masters, I went to New York University, graduating in Philosophy and Studio Arts.

What was your first exhibition and Where?

My first exhibition was in 1962 at The National Museum of Caracas with a large watercolor painting with which I won the first prize of the National Juvenile Painting Show.

What is the inspiration behind your Work?

The infinite potential human beings have to always surpass boundaries, even of the unthinkable.

What are the messages you convey through your art?

My work is based on the alteration of the observer's perceptive mental state by manipulating shapes with the purpose of dislocating our convictions of what they believe they are seeing. I consider myself a generator of existential circumstances. I use sculpture to subject the observer into discovering a broader relation of his Universe, establishing new rules in the game of perception.

Tell us about this (current) UNFATHOMABLE solo show

Unfathomable, as defined in the dictionary is the incapability of being fully explored or understood. A word that I feel connects with my work. This exhibition is a compendium of my work that subliminally subjects to your own

creativity and opens it up to see life in a different way or to continue that endless exploration.

How did you select the works for this exhibition you are presenting?

Being the first time I am showing my work in the UAE, I wanted to select pieces that were representative of my entire body of work, where color has always been center stage along with virtual volumes. Each piece was carefully selected and they jointly form a very interesting dialogue with the audience. I hope it will be well received!

When you choose works for a show in Dubai, are they different than works for the shows in another country? Different than for shows in Europe?

Each exhibition requires a study of the region in order to understand likes and dislikes to ensure it will be successful. We must take into account subtle cultural nuances as well. They are different shows but always with the same purpose- to surprise and alter perceptions.

As you appropriate icons from local, regional, and international contexts. Do you envision these having different meanings/messages in each context?

Since my work is essentially geometric abstract art, there is little context added from elsewhere. It is rather a didactical context in which your brain sees one thing and your eyes understand another. Precisely, it is this, which I find most captivating about life itself.

How do you envision your future of art on?

Investigation has been the driving force behind my work. It is through the further development that there is growth and a future. I strongly believe in the perseverance of hard work and to not lose sight of one's goals

RAFAEL BARRIOS

Rafael was born on November 22, 1947 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to Venezuelan parents.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 Rafael Barrios on Park Avenue, Art Nouveau Gallery, New York, USA
- 2012 Unfathomable, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2011 Galerie Deprez-Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2008 Laboratorio, La Cuadra Creativa Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2004 Galerie Lavignes Bastilles, Paris, France
- 1994 Ralleigh Gallery, Boca Raton, Florida, USA
- 1993 Sala de Arte del Sur, Puerto Ordaz, Venezuela
- 1987 Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofi Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
Galería Sotavento, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1983 Bloomingdales, Bergoff Goodman, Lord & Taylor, Sacks Fifth Avenue, New York, USA
- 1982 Novo Arts Gallery, New York, USA
- 1981 Art et Industrie Gallery, New York, USA•1980 Slash 80, Cayman Gallery, New York, USA
- 1978 Centro de Bellas Artes, Maracaibo, Venezuela

SELECTED GROUP EXPOSITIONS

- 2013 Art Wynwood, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2013 ArteAmerica, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2013 Art Paris, Pascal Janssens Galerie (Ghent), Paris, France
- 2013 Pinta London, LGM Arte Internacional, London, UK
- 2013 Art Southamptons, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), Southampton, USA
- 2013 Art Ghent, Pascal Janssens Galerie, Ghent, Belgium
- 2013 Feria Iberoamericana de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2012 Art Wynwood, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2012 The Armory Show, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), New York, USA
- 2012 ArteAmerica, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2012 Art Paris, Pascal Janssens Galerie (Ghent), Paris, France
- 2012 Pinta London, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), London, UK
- 2012 Art Southamptons, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), Southampton, USA
- 2012 Art Houston, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), Houston, USA
- 2012 Art Ghent, Pascal Janssens Galerie, Ghent, Belgium
- 2012 Pinta New York, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami), New York, USA

- 2012 Art Miami, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2012 Art Toronto, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto, Canada
- 2012 Feria Iberoamericana de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2012 Art Bruxelles, Pascal Janssens Galerie (Ghent), Brussels, Belgium
- 2012 Art Cologne, Lausberg Contemporary (Dusseldorf), Cologne, Germany
- 2012 25th Anniversary Exhibition, Art Nouveau Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2012 Art Shanghai, LGM Arte Internacional (Bogota), Shanghai, China
- 2012 Korea International Art Fair, LGM Arte Internacional (Bogota), Seoul, Korea
- 2012 Perspectivas del arte latinoamericano 1950-2012, Beijing Art Museum of Imperial City, Beijing, China
- 2011 MIA Art Fair - Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2011 ArteAmerica - Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2011 Pinta Art Fair - LGM Gallery (Bogota), London, UK
- 2011 Pinta Art Fair, Art Nouveau Gallery (Miami) New York, USA
- 2011 Art Miami, Lausberg Contemporary (Toronto), Miami, USA
- 2011 Art Toronto, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto, Canada
- 2011 Art Toronto, Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2011 Art Cologne, Lausberg Contemporary (Dusseldorf), Cologne, Germany
- 2011 Art Bruxelles, Pascal Janssens Galerie, (Ghent) Brussels, Belgium
- 2011 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2010 “Beyond Painting”, Lausberg Contemporary, Toronto, Canada
- 2010 “A Collective Sum”, Ideobox Artspace, Miami, USA
- 2010 “Espacio Otro”/ Alternate Space, Galería Cayón, Madrid, Spain
- 2010 Geometric Abstraction & Kinetic Art”, Pascal Janssens Galerie, Ghent, Belgium
- 2010 “Relief & Sculpture”, Art Nouveay Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2010 “Pequeña Escala”/ Small Scale, Galería la Cuadra. Caracas, Venezuela
- 2010 Arte América, Gabriela Benaim Gallery (Caracas), Miami, USA
- 2010 Art Chicago, Lausberg Contemporary (Toronto), Chicago, USA
- 2010 Art Chicago, Rukaj Gallery (Toronto), Chicago, USA
- 2010 Art Toronto, Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2010 Art Miami, Lausberg Contemporary (Toronto), Miami, USA
- 2010 Art Miami, Art Nouveau Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2010 ArtBo, Bogota, Colombia

- 2009 Art Miami, represented by Dotfiftyone Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2009 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Cometa Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2009 ArtBo, Bogota, Colombia
- 2009 Galerie Lavigne Bastilles, Paris, France
- 2008 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2008 Galerie Deprez-Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2008 Galerie Lavignes Bastille, Paris, France
- 2008 Chicago Art Fair, USA
- 2007 Expo Capuy Homenaje al Cuadrado, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2007 Expo Obra Monumental, La Cuadra Creativa Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2007 Arte Bogota, Graphis CB2 Gallery, Bogota, Colombia
- 2007 Galerie Lavignes Bastille, Paris, France
- 2007 Galerie Deprez-Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2007 Museum Shanghai Sculpture Space, China
- 2007 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2007 Art Nouveau Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2007 Alternative Space Exhibition, Chicago, USA
- 2006 II Geometric Art Exhibition, Espacio de Artes Yumares, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2006 Art Miami, Miami, USA
- 2006 Arte Americas, Miami, USA
- 2006 Galerie Deprez-Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2006 Galerie Lavignes Bastille, Paris, France
- 2006 Art Nouveau Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2005 Art Miami, Miami, USA
- 2005 Arte Americas, Miami, USA
- 2005 Galerie Deprez-Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2005 Galerie Lavigne Bastilles, Paris, France
- 2005 Toronto International Art Fair, Canada
- 2004 Espacio Cultural Capuy, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2004 Art + Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2004 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2004 Art Nouveau Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2004 Art Nouveau Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela•2004 Galeire D´arte Contemporain et Moderne, Paris, France
- 2004 Galerie Deprez – Bellorget, Paris, France
- 2004 Arte America, Miami, USA
- 2002 Art Miami, Felipe Grimberg, USA
- 2002 Palm Beach Art Fair, Felipe Grimberg, USA
- 2002 30x30 Exhibition, Grupo Li Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2002 Toronto International Art Fair, Toronto, Canada
- 2002 Nikola Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2001 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, represented by Hector Iguini, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2001 Toronto International Art Fair, represented by Moros Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2001 Guest artist, IV Bienal Barro de América, Centro de Arte Lía Bermúdez,Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2000 Senderos Escultóricos, Universidad Metropolitana, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2000 Moros Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 2000 Arte Tres Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2000 Ocre Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2000 Díaz Mancini Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2000 Dimaca Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1999 Dimaca Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1999 La Cuadra Creativa Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1999 Santa Fé Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1999 Grupo Li Gallery, Caracas, VenezuelaMoros Gallery, Maracaibo, Venezuela
- 1999 Graphics CB2 Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1998 International exhibition Three decades of Venezuelan Sculptures, Middle East tour
- 1996 Bienal de Artes Visuales Mercosur, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- 1995 Guest artist, VII Bienal de Escultura,
- 1995 Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Narváez, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
- 1995 Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, represented by Grupo Li Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1994 II Bienal Barro de América, Sofía Imber Contemporary Art Museum, Caracas, Venezuela Art Miami, Miami, Florida,USA
- 1991 I Feria Iberoamericana de Arte, Graphics CB2 Gallery, Caracas,Venezuela
- 1990 Panorama de las Artes Visuales en Venezuela, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1989 Ernst Alexander Gallery, Washington, USA

- 1988 Casa Bonita, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofia Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1987 La Conquista del Espacio, Espacio Alterno K18, VIII Documenta, Kassel, Germany
- 1984 I Bial de Escultura, Francisco Narváez Contemporary Art Museum, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
- 1984 Nuevas Tendencias del Mueble, Art et Industrie Gallery, New York, USA
- 1983 Salón Nacional de Jóvenes Artistas, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofia Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1983 Casa Guipuzcoana, La Guaria, Venezuela
- 1982 I Salón Nacional de Escultura, Museo de Arte de Barquisimeto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela
- 1982 II Bial de Artes Visuales, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofia Imber, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1981 Evaluation of the last decade of contemporary art, Sorrento, Italia
- 1981 Expo Art, Bari, Italia
- 1979 Art et Industrie Gallery, New York, USA
- 1974 Ontario College of Art, Canada
- 1973 Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada
- 1973 Ontario College of Art, Canada
- 1972 Ontario College of Art, Canada
- 1972 11th Annual Art Show, Toronto, Canada
- 1971 Arts and letters Club, Toronto, Canada

EDUCATION

- 1982 Master Degree, Art and Existential Philosophy, New York University, USA
- 1973 Bachelor Degree in Art, Communication and Design, Ontario College of Art, Toronto, Canada
- 1970 College Degree, Art Mention, Ashbury College, Ottawa, Canada
- 1963 Drawing and Art classes, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

- Don Juan Carlos de Borbón, King of Spain
- Gloria Von Untaxis, Princess of Germany
- Movilnet, Caracas, Venezuela
- World Bank, Caracas, Venezuela

- Jesús Soto
- Fundación Cultural Chacao, Caracas, Venezuela
- Citgo, Thompson Brothers, Houston, Texas, USA
- Electricidad de Caracas, Venezuela
- Banco Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela
- Art et Industrie Gallery, New York, USA
- Coca-Cola International, New York, EEUU
- Gustavo and Patricia CisnerosMiguel Haussman
- Eduardo Bolber
- Carlos and Mercedes Zuloaga
- Juan Carlos Escotet
- Procter & Gamble, Caracas, Venezuela
- Kazumi YoshidaSkuli Mogensen, WOWAir, Reykjavik, Iceland
- Dimensional Fund Advisors, Austin, Texas
- Robert and Soledad Hurst, Aspen, Colorado
- Hidalgo Socorro
- Braulio Perez

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

- Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada
- Carmenn Lamanna Foundation, Toronto, Canada
- Museo de Esculturas al aire libre, Alcalá de Henares, España
- Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofia Imber, Caracas, Venezuela

MONUMENTALE SCULPTURES

- 2009 Tapis, Midtown Miami, USA
- 2009 Triphasique, Midtown Miami, USA
- 2006 Rising Horizons, Sunny Isles, Miami, USA
- 2003 Vertical Dislocado, Universidad de los Andes, Merida, Venezuela
- Levitation, Murano Grande Building by Philippe Starck, Miami Beach, USA
- 1997 Tercer Horizonte II, Carupano, Venezuela
- 1994 Vertical dislocado en tres tiempos, Miranda State Government, Venezuela
- 1993 Vertical dislocado, Kristine Building, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1992 Tercer Horizonte, La Fontanilla Park, Palos de la Frontera, Spain

ART EDUCATION CAREER

1992 Seminar Fuentes y Obstrucciones al Arte, Instituto de Estudios Avanzados (IDEA), Universidad Simón Bolívar, Caracas, Venezuela

1982 Conference The thin line between Art and Design, New York University, USA

1974-77 Advertising and 3D Design, Instituto de Diseño Newmann, Caracas, Venezuela

1973 Art Director for the project The Toronto Idea, Toronto Architects Association, Canada

1972 Art Director for UNESCO

REALISATIONS RECENTES

Crest, Monument commémoratif Camp de Travailleurs Etrangers – Bruxelles, CNE -

Hauteville, Centre Hospitalier ORSEC -

Musée de La Margeride (acquisition publique)

PRESENTE EN PERMANENCE

Galerie Le Soleil sur la Place, Lyon

Galerie S. Emiliani, Dieulefit

Galerie Rauchfeld, 22 rue de Seine, 75006 Paris

Galerie Brulée, Strasbourg

Frans Vanhove Art Gallery, Louis Melsenstraat 13, Belgique

Galerie AA, Clermont Ferrand

Espace contemporain, Aubusson

