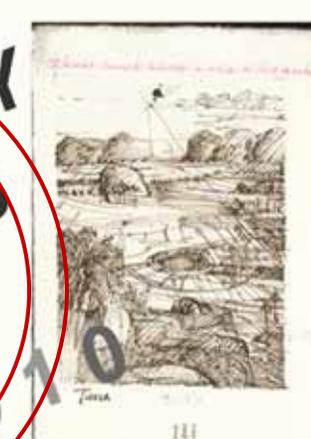


LYDIARUBIO



IDENTITY PAPERS

1993-2010

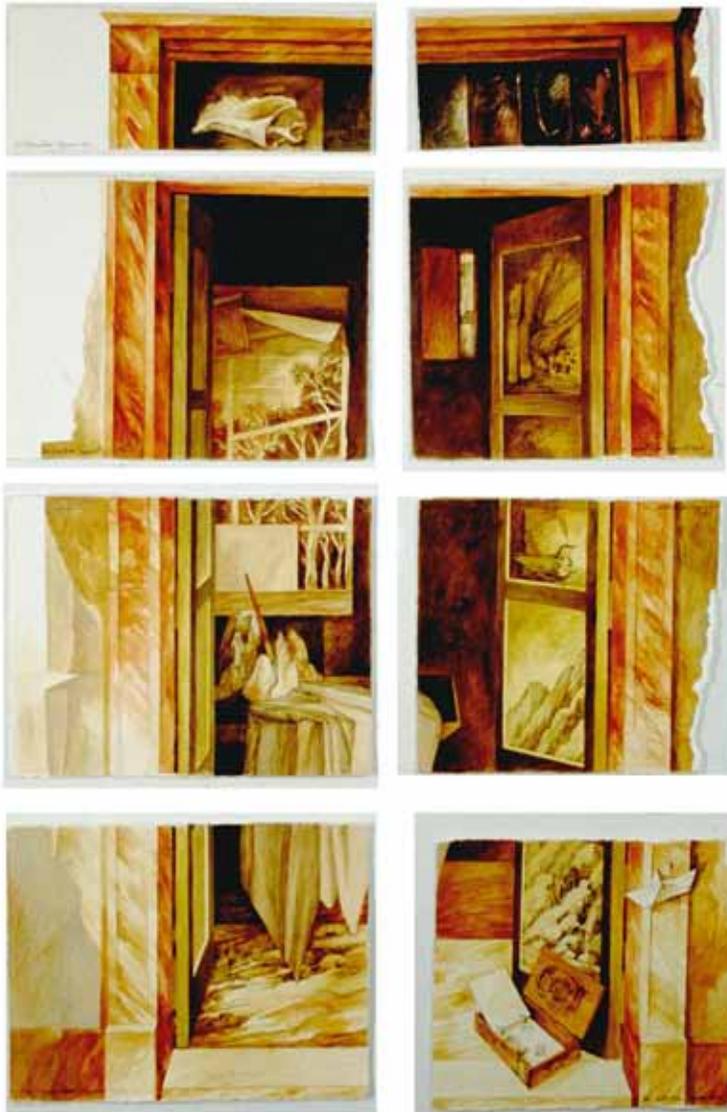
Text by Enrico M Santi





Island in a box, 1993 Watercolor on paper 21 " x 22 "





Doorway, 1993 Watercolor on paper 88" x 51"

LYDIA RUBIO: IDENTITY PAPERS

For the past two decades, Lydia Rubio has been engaged in a secret mission: to decipher the universe through Beauty. She has done so in series of works that explores personal obsessions: exile, nature, and, particularly, the relationship between ideas and forms—the worlds both inside and out. Are there codes that explain the mystery of landscape? What are the links among colors, shapes, relative sizes, calligraphies, or among the disparate objects Nature has to offer: birds, flowers, landscapes?

Today the viewer has before him the traces of that visionary quest displayed in thirty works on paper, plus one sculpture, ranging from 1993 to the present in what amounts to a dazzling retrospective. The result is a comprehensive exhibit of a major artist's work whose relentless pursuit of knowledge through form cannot help but produce compelling samples of visual intensity.

Chronologically, the show is divided into two decades: before and after Rubio's fateful return to Cuba in 1999. At first, the journey is anticipated and perhaps even *foreseen*. Such is the power of early pieces like "Doorway: Interior in 8 Fragments," "Intimate Immensity," or "Island in a Box," where snippets of island icons are arranged in dreamlike sequences along with images of artistic vocation (Rubio's iconic, signature quill-pen). What in their own time resulted in the monumental oil canvasses of the "Viñales" series—named for the gorgeous valley in Cuba's Eastern tip—here appear in two paper landscape suites of four pieces each—the *obstacles* (charcoals) and *studies for landscape* (sanguines)—on the same visual theme. In each, Rubio's virtuoso strokes capture visionary intensity, as if the self-same landscape, which at first appears in the form of false collages and later settles into one-dimensional drawings, cried out for alternate versions.

The satire of present-day Cuban commercial hypocrisy (“Avida Dollars,” “Cuban Bill”), and therefore Rubio’s own critical reaction, marks out the difference with the works from the second decade, which explore object-forms devoid of specific island reference—flowers, birds, letters—in ambitious, often dazzling arrangements. While the individual pieces of “Birds of Feeling” capture Rubio’s precise reading of aviary delicacy, these run parallel to major works that constitute *tours de force* of formal experimentation on paper. I refer to pieces like “Given: Three Roses,” “Miami Geneva 2001” and “Thunbergia,” along with “Poema Verde” and “La Pintura Auxilio,” all of which constitute daring experiments with multi-paneled works and with the relationship between calligraphy and imagery. It would be difficult, I think, to find in the present art horizon any meriting equivalents, in either canvas or paper, to Rubio’s masterful balance of formal elegance, technical flair and conceptual daring.

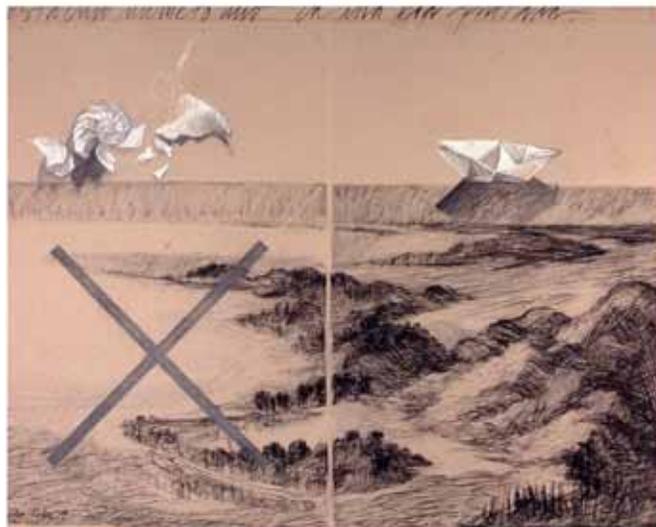
“Arcadia at 2 p.m.,” the show’s single sculpture, could well serve as the emblem for Lydia Rubio’s signature statement. It depicts a proud bird sitting atop her metal cage. Inside lies a clay island-like mound, sitting against a blue background, be it sea or sky, that shows in turn, the spectral version of a Masonic pyramid inscribed with a baffling title. *Et in Arcadia ego* was the classical topic in Renaissance painting showing the ultimate triumph of Death. Rubio’s “identity papers” tell us of yet another triumph: how Beauty, Art, and of course Freedom, conquer all.

Enrico M Santi

Enrico M Santi is a literary and art critic who lives in Claremont, California.



Obstáculos para llegar a la isla, 1994 # 5 and 1
Charcoal on paper each 38 1/2 " x 50 "





Landscape of Transparency 1999 Sanguine on paper 36" x 49"



Landscape of Resistance, 1999 Sanguine on paper 36" x 49"



Arcadia at 2 PM, 2001 Bird cage, clay, aluminum and oil on panel. 22" x 11" x 27 "



Vinales, Installed as valleys, 2001
Etching 2 of 7 seven prints each 21" x 15" Three installations: Valleys, Valles and Vinales



Cuban Bill 2003 Etching on Indian Paper Ed 35, 3 " x 7 "



Avida Dollars 2001, 6 of 15 Silkscreen Handcolored variant edition 21" x 25 "

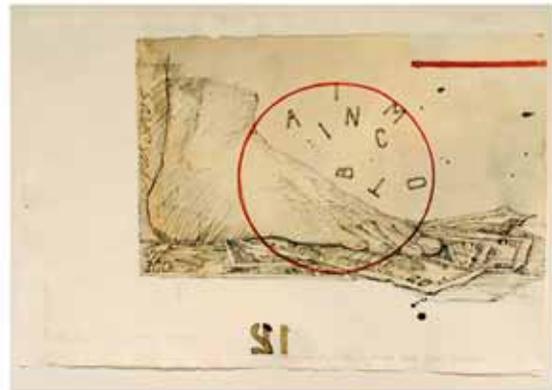
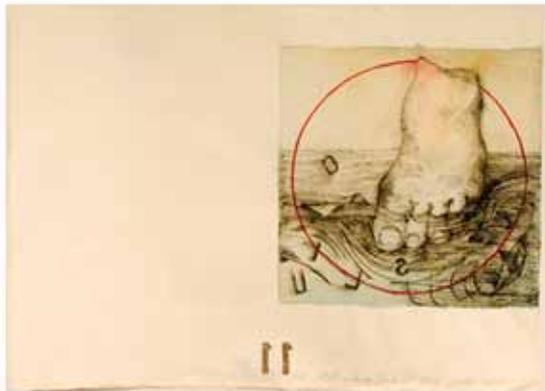
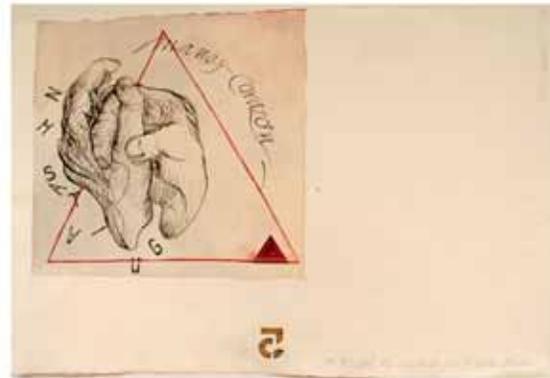
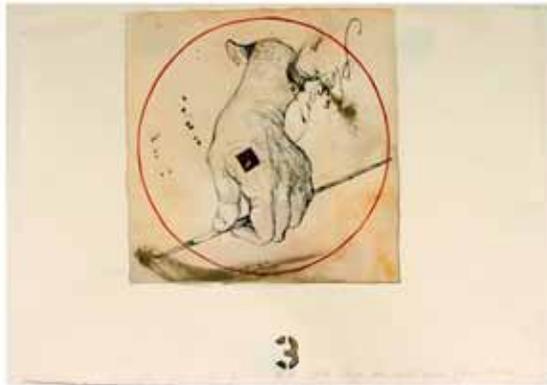


Miami Geneva 2001 Travel journal. Watercolor and ink on paper
 15 pieces each 14" x 11" and 3 accordion books each 14" x 30" in antique wood case.





Thunbergia 2010 Book and box. Watercolor on paper
Book 8" x 25" double sided accordion, cigar box 11" x 9" x 2"



LOT 12 2004 Studies for etchings Watercolor and ink on Amalfi paper each 12" x 14.5 "



La pintura auxilio 2010 Ink and gouache on Amalfi paper 19" x 27"

" New seasons are even cruder, and dreamers have become silent, I form with texts the word : HELP ! "

BIOGRAPHY

Lydia Rubio's multidisciplinary works are distinguished by the use of words and images in multi-paneled pieces and integrated installations. Her works suggest discontinuous narratives, riddles of paintings in sequences, accompanied by artist journals.

Ms. Rubio has completed important national and local large scale public art commissions: In 2008 The Gate of Earth, a monumental metal sculpture and terrazzo design for the Raleigh Durham Airport in North Carolina, in 2009 The Women's Park Art Gates and in 2001 "All night long, we heard birds passing" for Miami Dade County Art in Public Places. The Gate of Air, a second metal sculpture and floor design RDU Airport commission, will be completed in December 2010.

She is a recipient of the Creative Capital Professional Development Fellowship, Pollock Krasner Fellowship, the State of Florida Individual Artist Fellowship in Painting, the Cintas Fellowship and a Graham Foundation Award.

Ms. Rubio's works are in the permanent collections of Museum of Fine Arts of Indiana University, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, University of Southern California in Los Angeles, Wolfsonian FIU, Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale, Miami Dade Community College, Lowe Art Museum, Cuban Heritage Collection of the University of Miami, Frost Art Museum, Bryn Mawr College and Lehigh University Art Galleries, and important private collections in New York, Miami and Europe.

Lydia Rubio has exhibited with Bernice Steinbaum Gallery, Gloria Luria Gallery, The Americas Collection, Kunsthaus Miami, in South Florida, and Bridgewater Lustberg and Joyce Goldstein Galleries in NYC. She has Masters in Architecture from Harvard University and a Bachelors degree in Architecture from the University of Florida, her ten year teaching experience includes Harvard University, Parsons School of Design and the University of Puerto Rico. She has traveled extensively and lived in Puerto Rico, Boston and New York. She is currently based in Miami, Florida.

She is represented by Beaux Arts Des Ameriques in Montreal QB, where she recently had a solo show 2009 **Etrangere** and Cremata Gallery in Miami FL.

Web page: www.lydiarubio.com



Photo by Robbyn Wishna

CREMATA GALLERY

1646 SW 8th Street Miami FL 33135-5220
www.crematagallery.com
305 644-3315

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