

ENCOUNTERS IN ART

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by NORMA NIURKA

El Nuevo Herald's cultural correspondent

Few opportunities arise when availability of funds, locale, interest and unity in the world of Art converge to realize a common effort.

A golden opportunity took place when *London & Leeds Corp.*, a real estate firm based in New York, decided to extend its operations to South Florida by renting a 10 story building veneered in marble and trimmed with bronze on 901 Ponce de Leon Blvd. in Coral Gables.

Basing its premise on Building Bridges to make for better communication, the firm's president Anthony P. Grant, and his executives, asked The Cuban Museum of Art & Culture to organize a six-month long series of cultural activities.

"Art is an excellent vehicle to promote understanding", says Grant.

The Museum decided to seek collaboration from 10 of Miami's prominent galleries to realize its first activity. The galleries submitted works and the museum selected approximately seven per gallery.

The result of that is *Encounters and Collaborations*, the exhibition, which opens May 2 in the 901 Ponce Blvd. location. (A reception between 7 and 10 today is for invited guests.)

"The goal is the exchange of ideas and collaboration of efforts between the galleries and the Cuban museum", says Silvia Karman, the museum's administrator and one of the exhibition's organizers. The show has been in preparation since January. "The galleries working together and the museum guiding them".

According to Silvia, *London & Leeds* has spent nearly \$50,000 to adapt the exhibition's space.

The group show features oil works on canvas, drawings, sculptures, *installations, mixed media* and photographs.

Rogelio Pretto's *Harmonic Convergences* could well be the symbol of the Encounters project. The Panamanian artist, living in Miami, is showing a diptic evoking continuous movement with its recurring ribbons that can change positions every fifteen minutes with the help of someone that rotates the work's double panels.

"The work changes but doesn't lose its balance", signals Pretto, whose work is represented by *Joy Moos Gallery*. "Each panel captures the inverted image of the other, as if a mirror. You can see the work as you like".

The work is a study about elements which Pretto explored in his painting beginnings.

"I've refound here, the interrelationship which exists between time, space and energy and I'm trying to express it now with simple pictorial elements" says Pretto.

Galleries participating in the show are *Barbra Gillman, Virginia Miller, Elite, Green, Nina Subkova, Joy Moos, Opus Art Studios, South Florida Art Center, and Sterling Signatures*.

Among the artists represented in the exhibition are Pablo Cano, Mario Bencomo, Gina Pellón, Gilberto Ruis Valdés, Carlos Macía, Paul Sierra and Migueal Padura.

The show runs through June 30.