



César Trasobares: REDACTED

BY RAISA CLAVIJO

“Redacted,” the most recent solo exhibition of Cuban American artist César Trasobares is being exhibited until the beginning of November at LnS Gallery in Coconut Grove. The title of the exhibition invites reflection on the custom, prevalent in today’s world, of editing information disseminated to the public to make it “politically correct,” and not necessarily the truth. This practice extends to all fields of social, economic, political and cultural life. More than 90% of what reaches us through diverse media, whether newspapers, audiovisual media, the Internet, etc., has been “redacted.” This exhibition questions the veracity of the information we receive and share, and the way in which most media respond to the interests of power and money.

The exhibition includes various sculptures created from recycling and intervening old metal bookcases. Furthermore, it includes paintings on metal panels and a site-specific instal-

lation. Over the years, Trasobares has utilized bookcases and other types of display furniture to explore man’s obsession with classifying, indexing, studying and displaying the results of scientific research and the vestiges of the historic and cultural evolution of the human species. Since the beginning of his career, Trasobares has researched the value of objects and traditions used to preserve culture. As an immigrant, from a very early age, he witnessed the way in which Cubans preserved their customs, social rituals and objects of daily use that, while maintaining their culture alive, reflected their social status and the way in which they were inserting themselves into the American reality.

Through the recycling of bookcases and display furniture, commonly used in museums and libraries, the artist also reflects on the function of these institutions as preservers of culture and promoters of knowledge, questioning the way in which they sat-



César Trasobares, *Untitled VIII (Alexandrina)*, 2018, metal shelves construction including 6 Micro-Mega individual panels with enamel and spray paints. All images are courtesy of LnS Gallery.

OPPOSITE PAGE: “César Trasobares: Redacted,” installation view at LnS Gallery, Coconut Grove.

isfy the interests and expectations of the public. It is essential to consider that the public is not an inert entity, but rather that it changes in response to variables like time and social context.

In this exhibition, the metal bookcases have been destroyed and their remains have been intervened with paint. In the gallery context, they appear to be obsolete, disfigured artifacts, vestiges of a past of which with every passing day there are less and less traces. With the invention of digital storage media to store information, and the arrival of the Internet, which facilitates the storage of digital files in “virtual clouds,” the bookcase has become an anachronistic object. This is the same threat facing the printed book. Although I personally think that the printed book will continue to exist for many more decades, it is critical that publishers adapt to the digital revolution. Today, the average person accesses the world through his smartphone, using different apps that allow him

to read newspapers and magazines, to buy, to download and read digital books, to watch newscasts, to access countless television programs, to manage his bank account, to make online supermarket purchases, to order fast food, to call for a taxi, to request and pay for any type of service. In the current universe, the printed book and the bookcases used to store them do not appear to have a future.

However, this unlimited access to information and equal opportunities to publish all sorts of literature online has carried with it a lack of academic rigor in what is published. The reader of today must carefully filter the information that he finds on the Internet, if he wants to remain objective.

Umberto Eco referred to the misuse of the Internet and social networks as “the invasion of idiots.” This is precisely the wake-up call that Trasobares gives with these works. This legion of intervened bookcases seem to lead us to ask: What will the future



César Trasobares, *Untitled IV (dancing shadow)*, 2018, metal shelves with enamel and spray paints.



César Trasobares, *Untitled I (twist)*, 2018, metal shelves with enamel and spray paints.



César Trasobares, *Lounge*, glass, stainless tables, lights, music, site-specific installation at LnS Gallery.

of culture be? How will knowledge be produced 20 years from now? How will it be preserved? What should we preserve?

For its part, *Lounge* is an installation conceived for the gallery's "project room." The public can only view it through the glass separating it from the rest of the exhibition hall. The public can glimpse a dimly-lit space where several high tables have been placed, with lamps that emit a soft light, where hypothetical VIP guests could access privileged treatment. In this way the artist addresses the necessity in today's world of establishing social hierarchies, which need reserved spaces, restricting the access of common people.

César Trasobares is a very important figure in the development of Miami's artistic and cultural scene. He has collaborated with publications and exhibitions that evidence the Miami Generation's contribution to international contemporary

art. At the same time, over the past 40 years, he has contributed to documenting and driving the cultural development of the city. One of his recent contributions as curator was the exhibition "Carlos Alfonzo: Clay Works and Painted Ceramics" at the Pérez Art Museum Miami. For several years he was the Executive Director of Metro-Dade's Art in Public Places Program. Throughout his career, he has received fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and was the recipient of the Cintas Fellowship in Art (1980-1981). ■

"Redacted" is on view through November 3, 2018. LnS Gallery is located at 2610 SW 28th Lane, Miami, 33133. | Phone: 305 987 5642 | www.lnsgallery.com | info@lnsgallery.com.