VISIONARY OF HISTORY, CARL DE KEYZER PHOTOGRAPHS DOCUMENT CUBA'S STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

Art Exhibitions, Photography• Ana Moriarty

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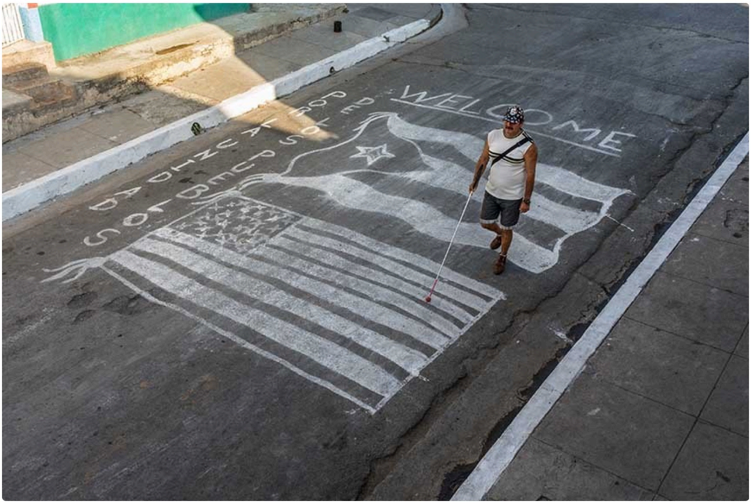

Roberto Polo Gallery is proud to present the exhibition **Carl De Keyzer** | *Cuba, la lucha*, a series of photographs made in 2015. The 60 archival pigment prints on fine art paper, mounted on DiBond, are a part of the series which documents Cuba's conversion from a Communist to a Capitalist regime and its effects on the population. *Cuba, la lucha* was thought up before **Barack Obama**'s speech in 2014 in which he invited the mitigation of Cuba's fifty-six-year embargo. President Obama is scheduled to visit the island three days after the private view of *Cuba, la lucha*, once again proving Carl De Keyzer's visionary talents regarding the world history. This visit will be the first of an American president to Cuba in eighty years.

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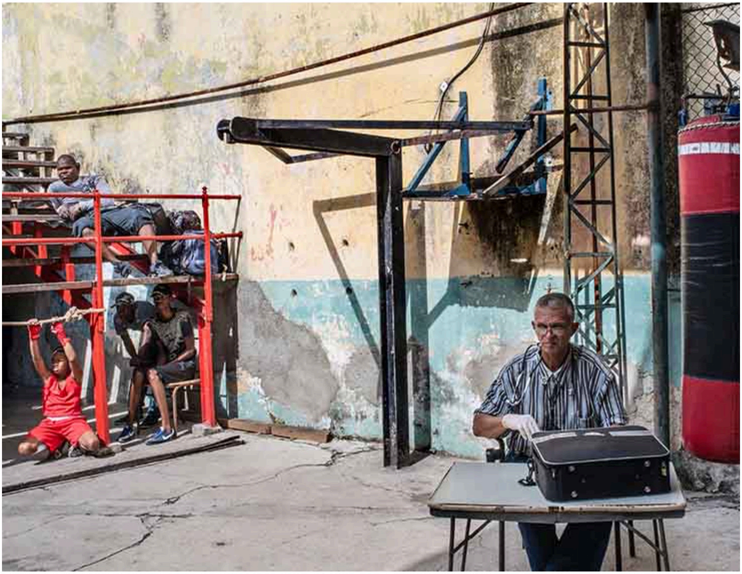
Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Camagüey, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015

Carl De Keyzer – A Visionary of History

Carl De Keyzer, a Belgian contemporary photographer and a member of Magnum Photos, is considered to be somewhat of a visionary, or a prophet, for that matter. His book, *Homo Sovieticus*, shot in the year before the fall of the **Berlin Wall**, was published on the 9th of November 1989, on the day of the fall. The book shows premonitory images that establish Keyzer as a proper notary of contemporary world history. His other works, usually published in books, deal with the motifs of religion (*God Inc*., 1992), colonization (*Congo(Belge)* and *Congo Belge en images*, 2009), environment (*Moments Before the Flood*, 2012), as well as the prison system (*Zona*, 2003). He is the master of observation, presenting man-made systems and focusing on humor and vulnerability of everyday situations his photographs capture.



Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Havana, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015

Carl De Keyzer | Cuba, la lucha

In January 2015, after president Obama's famous announcement to rebuild the Cuban-American relationship, Carl De Keyzer arrived in Cuba and started taking shots of history in the making. His powerful images capture the charm and honor of Cuban people in their struggles to survive the impediments bestowed upon them. Through the snapshots of dilapidated buildings, we see the old splendor of the nation as well as the will for the restoration of the economic system they so direly need. *Cuba, la lucha* captures the lives of people affected by poverty, but, in Carl De Keyzer's case, the accent is not on the scarcity and the despair. Instead, his images convey the ambiguity, the fine line between joy and melancholy, the poverty and the apparent status symbols, the kitsch and the refined,

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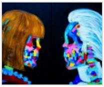
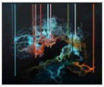


'FASHION ALLOWS PEOPLE TO BECOME ART' BRADLEY THEODORE IN HIS FIRST ...



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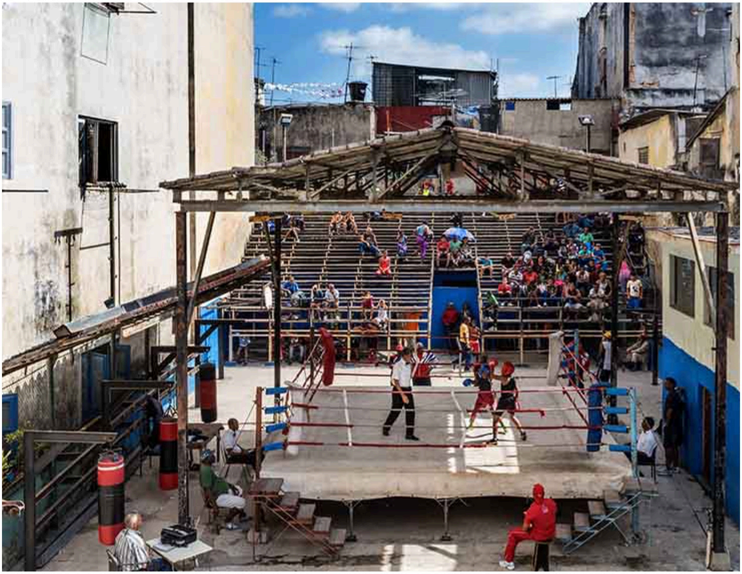
the traditional and the modern. He masterfully records the essence of Cuba, glorious, yet crumbling under the pressure of the capitalist world.



Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Havana, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015

Cuba, la lucha Exhibition, and the Book

Carl De Keyzer's *Cuba, la lucha* will be presented at the solo exhibition in Roberto Polo Gallery. The illustrated book *Carl De Keyzer | Cuba, la lucha*, will be published in an addition to the exhibition. Written by Gabriela Salgado, a London-based Argentinian art historian, curator and author, the book will be co-published by **Lannoo** and **Roberto Polo Gallery**. *Cuba, la lucha* will be on view from **March 18th** to **May 15th, 2016**. The private view is scheduled for **Thursday, March 17th**, from **6 PM** to **9 PM** at Rue Lebeau 8–12 Lebeaustraat, Brussels.

All images courtesy of Roberto Polo Gallery, Brussels.

Featured images: Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Cienfuegos, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Cienfuegos, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Havana, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Havana, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Havana, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Pinar del Rio, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Sancti Spiritus, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015 / Carl De Keyzer – Taken in Sancti Spiritus, From the series Cuba, la lucha, 2015

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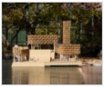

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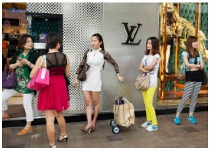

Can We Find the Remnants of Realism in Contemporary Art ?

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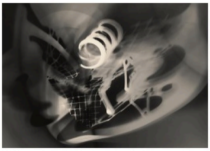

These Contemporary Photogram Artists Don't Need the Camera

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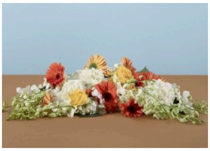

Taryn Simon Portrays Flowers as the Central Elements of Pivotal Moments in History at Gagosian...

The history of flowers has been surrounded by symbolism and mythology for thousands of years, affecting our responses and arousing emotions. Many artists have used botanical imagery as a rich visual symbolism. In her new series, the Ameri...

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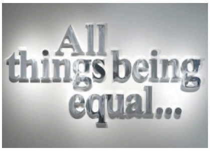
All things being equal...

Issues of National Identity, Migration, and Social Justice Tackled by Hank Willis Thomas at Jablonka...

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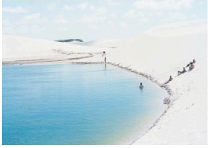

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Recent photographs made by the praised Italian artist

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