

Transcription of Podcast Episode 329: Coachella Valley Art Center

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SPEAKERS

Bob Firing, Bill Schinsky, Adriana Lopez-Ospina

Note: This transcription was computer-generated and may contain typographical errors.

Bob Firing 00:00

Good morning Shadow Hills. Well, in an effort to keep you apprised of things that are, interesting things that are going on in Indio. My guest this morning is Bill Schinsky. Bill is the founder of the Coachella Valley Art Center. Bill. Welcome to the podcast.

Bill Schinsky 00:26

Thank you, Bob. Good to be here.

Bob Firing 00:28

And so, when did you start the Art Center and where are you located?

Bill Schinsky 00:35

Well, I started in the current building in 2011. And the location is 45140 Towne Street, downtown Indio, two doors north of Indio City Hall.

Bob Firing 00:49

Great. And you do on balance an annual exhibition of artists. This one is called "Cultural Cannibalism." So that's a very provocative title. Why don't you explain that to the audience?

Bill Schinsky 01:08

Well, it is a provocative title because I like to do provocative exhibitions. That's part of my exhibition philosophy, as I like to do shows the challenge that people question, sometimes get upset. But this whole project started about a year ago, we were having Desert Open Studios. And there were a number of people walking through, and I had grizzly and blossom, bossa nova music playing and that was doing some work. And a lady walked up to me and said, "I love your music." And I said, well, thank you, so do I. She goes, "well, I'm from Brazil," and she introduced herself, Flávia Monteiro. And she's from Rio. And we started talking, she's an artist who currently lives in Palm Springs and Los Angeles. She, we just kind of were generally talking about art in the states are in Brazil, and how it happens, and she mentioned something about appropriation, which is happening all over the world. And she expanded on it. And I said, That's not appropriation, that's cannibalism. And it just dawned on me at that second. Ah, what a perfect theme concept for an exhibition. So we continue to talk and the weekend ended and the more I thought about it, the more I've decided that, oh no, this, this topic is too important, and too interesting to let go. So I contacted Flávia and asked her if she would participate,

she said yes. I contacted Kim Manfredi, who is a painter from Palm Springs. I contacted Joyce Rooks, who is one of my resident artists here at the Art Center. And I asked Adriana, aka Alex, that's what we know her by, if she would be interested in participating. And one of the reasons that I chose the people I chose because I wanted to do installation pieces, not just works on the wall. And this was the challenge for the artists because most of them have never done an installation. So, not only what is going to challenge them as far as their art practice goes, but it was a challenge to interpret the concept of the theme into a three dimensional, on the floor, type installation.

Bob Firing 04:01

That answers the question that was going through my mind, an installation is a free-standing piece that is not against the wall, it's something you can walk around.

Bill Schinsky 04:13

Correct? Yes.

Bob Firing 04:16

Okay.

Bill Schinsky 04:17

And, so once everyone started thinking about it and started working, no one ever spoke much about their concepts, but as people thought about it, cogitated on it, this show has become one of the most personal, individually personal, exhibitions that I've been involved with in a long time because each artist has taken a different approach to the art piece itself. But, a very similar approach in their personal involvement of in their interpretation of the concept. And it really is, for me, one of the most exciting components of this exhibition because we're dealing with appropriation . . . what is the other word I'm looking for? In a way, not annihilation of culture, we're talking about personal involvement in culture. And it's all coming through and in different ways.

Bob Firing 05:39

I see. And, you you've got an artist with you. Why don't you describe your thought process and describe the piece you created?

Adriana Lopez-Ospina 05:51

Yeah, hi. So I'm Adriana Lopez-Ospina. And I'm a Colombian American artist. And I came at it from an angle of appropriation. And really my piece is about addressing the draining whitewashing and thoughtless cannibalization of indigenous culture in Colombia, which is where my family is from. And what I want people to sort of talk about and really see in my piece is that contemporary economic pillaging is as violent as eliminating, you know, communities was in colonial time. A lot of times people when they go into these tourist shops, when they're shopping, when they're traveling abroad, they really buy replicas of what are really originals. And they'll walk by indigenous people on the street that are selling these original pieces, and they're ignored, or completely looked down upon for doing that, when they're the people that created these cultures that people go out and admire and consume constantly. So it's something that just really brings anger and sadness to me, because, you know, people have the money to set up the shops, and put up a more palatable version, replicas, of their pieces, and it just

looks more enticing to a consumer. And so people think it's innocent to walk by the person on the street selling the originals, but go into a shop that is profiting off of their ideas. So that's what my piece is about.

Bob Firing 07:34

Okay. Well, thank you. And Bella, how many artists are there in total?

Bill Schinsky 07:38

Well, actual artists will be five we have one artist, we, we started out with six. And one artist, Hector Salas was going to be doing a performance piece, an absurdist performance piece. But unfortunately, Hector is currently going under treatment for cancer.

Bob Firing 08:02

I see, I see.

Bill Schinsky 08:03

He will be here. remembered with a with a jacket that he made for another piece in his past?

Bob Firing 08:13

Okay well so, Shadow Hills, if you want to meet the artists, the opening is this Friday evening, beginning at five o'clock. And you wait goes what until eight o'clock, Bill?

Bill Schinsky 08:29

Until eight.

Bob Firing 08:29

Okay. And if you can't make it Friday, but this interests you, the exhibit is going on for quite a while. Bill, how long does it go for?

Bill Schinsky 08:41

Cultural cannibalism will be on view through the 28th of May. And you can drop by Monday through Saturday, anytime from 9am to 1pm.

Bob Firing 08:54

Got it? Got it.

Bill Schinsky 08:56

I'll be here.

Bob Firing 08:57

Okay. Well, thank you very much for explaining it to us. And so to the audience, if you're looking for something to do Friday night, I know there's a lot of interest in art around here. And if you'd like to meet some real artists, get a different slant on things, this would be a good thing to consider. And otherwise,

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you've got all through April and May to go visit it. So thank you, Bill and Adriana. Thank you very much and to the audience. Until next time, bye bye!