

## 55th Venice Biennale, Exclusive Interview: Glenda Leon / Cuban Pavilion

June 12, 2013



Uprising Art is happy to share with you a series of interviews dedicated to the Cuban Pavilion in the [55<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale](#), we reported from last May 28-June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Focusing on the presence of Caribbean contemporary artists in this major international event, we interviewed the Cuban Pavilion, the Bahamian Pavilion, and the Instituto Italo-Latino Americano Pavilion.

Read the artist [Glenda León](#) on her participation in *La Perversión de lo clásico: Anarquía de los relatos*.

**Could you present your piece *Música de las Esferas*?**

It is a music box that I built taking the planets in the solar system as notes. Based on the position the planets had on the specific day that I started the work – on October 20 – I juxtaposed empty musical scores to create a composition.

I needed to make round musical scores and from there I took that image and gave it to a composer asking him to read it, to put what he saw, not to interpret it. The result was this. We have nine notes only, and the composition is a loop of 30 seconds.

I gave the composition to a house in Switzerland that makes music boxes. A motor in the sphere runs the music box. I had this glass sphere built in Segovia, Spain, especially for this.

### **How did you develop that artwork?**

My idea for *Música de las Esferas* comes from the Greeks, and mainly Pythagoras and Plato. For them, everything is related to mathematical calculation. The harmony of the world and universe was perfectly there they said, and drew a connection between music and mathematics as related.



Glenda Leon, *Musica de las Esferas*, 2013 © Uprising Art

I loved the idea the planets have sound. I thought it was great. The way they move and the speed they move produces music but we are not able to hear it. We miss things. We do not have the ability to listen. This is

fascinating and this is why I had this idea of having music from the spheres in a very simple way where, as I told you, I built a partition and composition only by juxtaposing an empty musical score to the solar system picture.

**You have dealt already a lot with music in your artistic practice. Could you recall the relationship you have established between music and art?**

This came really deep inside actually because I was born with a deep feeling about music and dance and their expression through my body. I like expressing what I feel with my body and first I wanted to be a dancer. I practiced ballet for 10 years and after that the main thing that was remaining was sound. I was fascinated by it.

When I came to artistic practice, my very first art piece was a sound amplification of the steps of people in a show. This sound installation dates back to 1999. From then I have been working with sound in elements as music boxes or material likes vinyl's records. I like playing with materials that you do not listen to but you know there is sound on it.

There is sound and music in two ways in my pieces: conceptually and physically.

**Your practice is embedded in poetry and lightness.**

I think we are missing a lot of spirituality in our world, especially in art. Yet, there is a need for spirituality. Social problematic are being represented a lot in artworks. That is ok but for me it is a peripheral issue.

For me the essential thing is in our soul, is inside. I think that could be associated with poetry and lightness. I mean if we understand lightness in a way of being 'lift spiritually', then yes, that is one of my main target both in life and in my work. Life should be lighter and lighter.

*Venice, Italy – May 31, 2013*  
*By Clelia Coussonnet*