

MIGUEL ANGEL RÍOS

b. 1943, Catamarca, Argentina

Lives in Mexico City, Mexico and New York, NY, USA

"...I make visible the violent moment in which we live, where we feel that life has no value. It is competition, power, violence, and chaos. The viewer may choose to identify with the powerful or with the vulnerable..."

Miguel Angel Ríos studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires before moving to New York in the 1970s to escape the military dictatorship in Argentina. He subsequently relocated to Mexico and now divides his time between the U.S. and Mexico.

In his work, Ríos pairs a rigorous conceptual approach with a meticulously constructed, often handmade aesthetic. Since the 1970s, he has made work about the concept of the "Latin American," using this idea as both an artistic strategy and a political problem. In the 1990s, he began creating a series of maps, which he carefully folded and pleated by hand. Marking the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of the Americas, the maps indicate long histories of power and colonial experience, and they reference traditional indigenous arts in the Americas, including the Andean quipu.

Since the early-2000s, Ríos has also delved into the medium of video to create symbolic narratives about human experience, violence, and mortality. His videos of spinning tops--trompos--use the childhood game of tops as a backdrop for a meditation on the transience of life, and the mechanics of power. In his 2012 Untitled video from *The Ghost of Modernity*, Ríos references high Modernism--with direct nods to John Cage, Marcel Duchamp, and Donald Judd--in the midst of the Mexican desert. "Is this ghostly geometric figure a lens through which the world can be reinterpreted?" the artist asks. "Or is it the paradigmatic principle of modernist thought that organizes the world around it? Are we inside or outside the cube? "

Miguel Angel Rios' works are represented in several major collections including Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Bogotá, Colombia; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York, NY, USA; Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zürich, Switzerland; Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo, "la Caixa", Barcelona, Spain; Fundación Costantini, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, USA; La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, France; Museo Nacional, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, TX, USA; The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY, USA; Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), Miami, FL, USA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA, USA and the Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ, USA.