

**Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum to Present
*Modern Cuban Painters from Havana to New York Revisited***

On view May 2 to October 18, the exhibition reenvisioning a landmark 1944 MoMA exhibition



Mariano Rodríguez, *El desayuno* (The Breakfast), 1943. Oil on canvas, 30 ½ x 41 inches. Photo Cora Jean Rafe.
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Miami, FL (April 8, 2026) – The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum will host *Modern Cuban Painters from Havana to New York Revisited*, an exhibition that explores the seminal moment in 1944 when Cuban modern art penetrated the U.S. cultural landscape with New York’s Modern Museum of Art (MoMA) mounting its first exhibition devoted to modern Cuban art. A bold reenvisioning of the 1944 exhibit, *Modern Cuban Painters from Havana to New York Revisited*, further examines the impact of New York and the city’s galleries in promoting Cuban modernism in the 1940s. Bringing together paintings, drawings, archival materials, and historical documents from galleries and private collections, it offers a rare opportunity to reconsider the artistic exchange between Havana and New York at a defining moment in Latin American modernism. The exhibition is on view from May 2 to October 18, 2026.

“For the first time in 80 years, original works from galleries and private collections are reunited in *Modern Cuban Painters from Havana to New York Revisited*,” said curator Elizabeth Thompson Goizueta. Providing a context to reexamine the influence and impact of Cuban modernism, the works travel across time. Today, along with this exhibition, public audiences celebrate Cuban and Cuban American exhibits in New York (MoMA’s Wifredo Lam and El Museo del Barrio’s Coco Fusco),

proving that Cuban modernism is alive and well. Now the exhibition comes to Miami, the logical venue for Cuban modernism, reconsidered at the crossroads of the Americas and Europe from a twenty-first-century perspective.”

In 1942, Alfred H. Barr Jr., founding director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), visited Havana for the first time. He encountered an artistic community in full creative bloom, with its avant-garde painters generating a new visual language rooted in modernism, national identity, and cultural hybridity. This pivotal visit set in motion the landmark exhibition *Modern Cuban Painters* at MoMA in 1944, the first major U.S. presentation to recognize the emergence of the modern art movement in Cuba. The 1944 exhibition was accompanied by the influential publication *Pintura Cubana de Hoy*, edited by María Luisa Gómez Mena with texts by critic José Gómez Sicre. Both leaders, long underacknowledged, were pivotal in shaping modern Cuban art.

Curated by Elizabeth Thompson Goizueta and Cristina Figueroa Vives in collaboration with the Fundación Mariano Rodríguez, *Modern Cuban Painters from Havana to New York Revisited* returns to this crucial cultural exchange while expanding its narrative for contemporary audiences. The exhibition underscores New York’s historical role as a global art center that embraced Cuban modernists—figures such as Wifredo Lam, Mario Carreño, Cundo Bermúdez, Mariano Rodríguez, and Amelia Peláez—and provided them a platform for dialogue, experimentation, and visibility.



Felipe Orlando, *Retrato de Concha* (Portrait of Concha), 1941. Oil on canvas, 26 x 23 inches. Dr. Blas Reyes Collection

“World War II radically transformed New York into a refuge and a crossroads for artistic innovation. As European artists, dealers, and intellectuals fled the war, the city became a vibrant cultural center open to

new voices and new aesthetic proposals. It was in this dynamic environment that the work of Cuban modernists were quickly identified and championed by figures such as Alfred H. Barr Jr., José Gómez Sicre, and María Luisa Gómez Mena, who recognized not only its artistic relevance but also its distinct contribution to global modernism”, said Cristina Figueroa Vives. “This exhibition—and the historical book that inspired it—allow us to trace the presence of Cuban art within a New York that had welcomed the leading intellectual and artistic forces of its time. By revisiting these connections, we highlight the profound dialogue that emerged between Cuban artists and the city’s avant-garde scene—one that shaped their trajectories and expanded the cultural fabric of modern art history.”

In an unprecedented gathering, the exhibition integrates:

- **Works originally displayed in MoMA’s 1944 *Modern Cuban Painters* exhibition**, reunited for the first time in more than 80 years.
- **Paintings exhibited in notable New York galleries during the 1940s**, including Pierre Matisse Gallery, Perls Gallery, Julien Levy, and Feigl Gallery, will be highlighted. Not viewed publicly in decades, these paintings from disparate national and international locations have been reunited and recontextualized from a historical lens.
- Original materials from the **José Gómez Sicre Visual Archive** will be exhibited, including photographs, scrapbooks, letters, and unpublished documents. These materials provide an intimate and unique perspective on the intellectual, cultural, and personal networks that shaped the careers of Cuban artists in the mid-twentieth century.

Together, these works create a rare opportunity to reconsider the artistic connections between Havana and New York during a defining era of Latin American modernism.

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Notes to Editors

Exhibiting Artists

Cundo Bermúdez · Mario Carreño · Roberto Diago · Carlos Enríquez · Antonio Gattorno · Wifredo Lam · Felipe Orlando · Luis Martínez Pedro · Amelia Peláez · Fidelio Ponce · René Portocarrero · Mariano Rodríguez · Víctor Manuel

About FIU

Florida International University is a Top 50, preeminent public research university with 55,000 students from all 50 states and more than 140 countries, as well as an alumni network of more than 340,000. Located in the global city of Miami, the university offers more than 200 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels, including medicine and law. FIU faculty are leaders in their fields and include National Academy members, Fulbright Scholars, and MacArthur Genius Fellows. A Carnegie R1 institution, FIU drives impactful research in environmental resilience, health, and technology and innovation. Home to the Wall of Wind and Institute of Environment, FIU stands at the forefront of discovery and innovation. With a focus on student success, economic mobility and community engagement, FIU is redefining what it means to be a public research university.

About the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum FIU

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum at Florida International University was founded in 1977 and is a Smithsonian Affiliate in Miami. The museum’s mission is to spark curiosity and learning while developing local and global connections through art as a leading international university. Admission to the museum is always free. The Frost is located on the FIU Modesto Maidique Campus at 10975 SW 17

Street. The museum is open Tuesday - Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and closed on Mondays and most federal holidays. For more information, please visit the Frost [website](#).

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