Cuba: Then and Now

I. I. (July 10, 2015)



Sous Les Etoiles Gallery is proud to present “Cuba, Then & Now,” a group show featuring the work of Italian photographer Ernesto Bazan and social documentary photographer Magdalena Solé.

Selections from Bazan’s recently completed trilogy on Cuba, shot during the so-called “Special Period,” are paired with Spanish-born Solé’s latest series CUBA [2] - Hasta Siempre (Cuba Forever), taken between 2011-2015.

Ernesto Bazan [3]’s black-and-white photographs, from the vivid street life he captured in the first years after his arrival in Cuba in 1992, to the contemplative panoramic images of ISLA published for the first time in 2014, documents one of the most complex times for the island country. Yet, grounded in warmth, and borne from the artist’s deeply treasured connection with the people of Cuba, the series conveys the heady, erratic energy through the lens of an insider.

For Solé, the island became an unexpected balm, transporting the artist to the Spain she

remembered from her childhood. While Cuba remained in the backwaters of American consciousness, Solé rejoiced to see the simple repasts of 1960s Spain alive and well in Cuba, and sought to reveal through her signature eye for color the first stirrings of transformation in a country on the brink of change.

Ernesto Bazan, b. 1959 in Palermo, is represented in the collections of such prestigious museums as the Museum of Modern Art and the International Center of Photography in New York City; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX. Bazan is the recipient of the W. Eugene Smith Grant; Mother Jones International Fund for Documentary Photography; Dorothea Lange-Paul Taylor Prize at Duke University, NC; and the World Press Photo award; as well as fellowships from the Alicia Patterson Foundation and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.
In 2009, his book "Bazan Cuba [4]" was awarded Book of the Year at the New York Photo Festival [5].
Magdalena Solé [6] is a social documentary photographer concerned with communities at the edge of society. Known for her sensitive expressions of culture through distinctive color artistry, her photographs describe brief moments of human existence, carried by the rhythm of a setting.

Her previous series Mississippi Delta, featuring the oft-overlooked community of the iconic Delta region, has most recently been exhibited at the Southeast Museum of Photography in Daytona Beach, FL; and the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, MA. In 2011 she was awarded the Silver Prize at Slow Exposures, Concord, GA.

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