

I GIARDINI DI PIRANESI

15.05.2026 – 08.08.2026

GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to present a solo exhibition by one of the most influential voices on the international art scene, Carlos Garaicoa. The exhibition, titled *I giardini di Piranesi* and specially conceived by the Cuban artist for the gallery's Roman venue, brings together a new series of drawings, watercolors, paintings, and a large-scale installation, *Contrapeso (Ciudad Plomada)*. Comprising small metal weights anchored to the ground, reminiscent of miniature buildings, and shimmering brass counterweights of various shapes and symbols suspended above them, the installation immediately draws the viewer's eye through the visual tension created by intersecting diagonals and the harmonious interplay of forms.

At the core of Carlos Garaicoa's practice has always been the city, understood as a complex and layered organism, shaped by tensions between memory, transformation, and possibility. The artist observes architecture and urban landscapes, grasping their underlying structures, their wounds, and their dreams—both those that have been abandoned and those still yet to be realized—and then reworks them through a creative process that weaves together past and future. From this emerge new perspectives and lines of flight, in which the collective dimension and the multitude take center stage in a continuous process of becoming.

The work of Giovanni Battista Piranesi resonates in the recent practice of Carlos Garaicoa, finding a particularly compelling synthesis in this new exhibition. The

project can be understood as a form of homage and a shared line of inquiry, especially in the use of drawing as a tool for analyzing urban reality and in the idea of the ruin as a starting point for artistic investigation. As in the celebrated visions of Piranesi, Garaicoa conceives the city as a critical device—a narrative territory in which structural order intertwines with ruin, utopia, and a symbolic excess that continually destabilizes its meaning.

At the core of the exhibition is a new series of drawings and paintings in which carnivorous and poisonous plants, deliberately oversized, grow to match—or threaten—the scale of the decaying buildings of Havana with which they coexist. This reversal of visual hierarchies prompts a symbolic reading in which the organic element ceases to be merely decorative and instead takes on an active, almost aggressive role, set against the space of modern architecture in decline. In this context, the dialogue with Piranesi becomes more explicit: the eighteenth-century artist not only imagined prisons and cities overwhelmed by their own monumentality, but also conceived the garden as a space of power, order, and representation, as demonstrated by his intervention at the Villa Magistrale dei Cavalieri di Malta on the Aventine Hill. Similarly, in Garaicoa's work, vegetation invades the urban environment, becoming a critical metaphor for the fragility of the modern project and the social conflicts that emerge between utopia and survival.

This line of inquiry is further developed in

the installation *Contrapeso (Ciudad Plomada)*, which extends Piranesi's legacy by proposing the image of a city suspended between balance and threat. Here, the promise of stability and architectural perfection reveals its darker side, evoking the Venetian artist's visions of impossible cities and carceral spaces as a powerful allegory for the political, social, and existential tensions of contemporary life.

About the artist:

Carlos Garaicoa, born in Havana (Cuba) in 1967, studied thermodynamics and later painting at the Instituto Superior de Arte de La Habana (1989 - 1994). He currently lives and works between Havana and Madrid. Together with his wife, he founded the artist-in-residence project *Artista x Artista* in Havana.

Garaicoa has developed a dialogue between art and urban space through which he investigates the social structure of our cities in terms of their architecture. He employs a multidisciplinary approach to address cultural and political issues through the study of architecture, urbanism and history.

Among his most recent solo exhibitions are: *Toda utopía pasa por la barriga*, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno (CAAM), Gran Canaria and *Es Baluard* Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Spain (2024); *Ascoltare il volo degli uccelli*, Rocca Maggiore, Assisi, Italy (2024); *Oratorio*, Oratorio San Filippo Neri, Bologna, Italy (2022); *Soñamos en la superficie rayada de un cristal*, Wellbeing Summit Week, Bilbao, Spain (installation) (2022); *Partitura*, PEM Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, USA (2021). Other solo shows have been presented at SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah (2020); Lunds Konsthall and Skissernas Museum, Lund (2019); Parasol Unit Foundation, London (2018); Fondazione Merz, Turin (2017); MAAT, Lisbon (2017); Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao (2017); Museum Villa Stuck, Munich (2016); Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo (2015); CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Móstoles, Madrid (2014); Fundación Botín, Santander (2014).

He has participated in major international events including the Cuenca Biennial (2023); the Havana Biennials (1991, 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2009, 2012, 2015); Shanghai (2010); São Paulo (1998, 2004, 2010); Venice (2005, 2009); Johannesburg (1995); Liverpool (2006); and Moscow (2005), as well as the Triennials of Guangzhou (2008), Auckland (2007), San Juan (2004), Yokohama (2001), and Echigo-Tsumari (2012); Documenta 11 and Documenta 14; and PhotoEspaña 12 (2012).

He has recently received the PEM 2021 Award (Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, USA). In 2005

he received the XXXIX International Prize for Contemporary Art - Prince Pierre de Monaco Foundation, and the Katherine S. Marmor Award in Los Angeles.

About the gallery:

GALLERIA CONTINUA Galleria Continua is located within the prestigious The St. Regis Rome, where since 2018 it has presented works by leading international artists including Loris Cecchini, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Sun Yuan & Peng Yu, Hans Op de Beeck, and Ai Weiwei, among others. Since 2022, Galleria Continua has also been an active partner of *Arte di Vivere*, the festival dedicated to art, music, and cuisine for the city of Rome, organized by The St. Regis Rome. The established partnership between the gallery and the Roman hotel will give rise in the coming months to a series of new projects and cultural activities, including artist residencies, workshops for secondary schools, guest experiences, talks, and themed events.

GALLERIA CONTINUA / Rome

The St. Regis Rome, Via Vittorio E. Orlando 3, Rome, Italy. +39 3333870553|
roma@galleriacontinua.com
from Tuesday to Saturday 11.00-19.00

For further information about the exhibition and photographic material:
Silvia Pichini, Head of Communications
press@galleriacontinua.com