

cynthia byrnes  
contemporary art

Monika Bravo  
Artist Statement

I am a multi-disciplinary artist born in Bogotá, Colombia. I studied fashion design in Rome & Paris and Photography in London and NYC, In 1994, I relocated to NYC to pursue a career in the arts. I enjoy directing and producing diverse projects, from complex multimedia installations and public art commissions to artists' books, podcasts, and textile objects. I see no boundaries between the applied and fine arts or any other form of channeling creation. In addition to having a very active professional practice as an artist, I am very curious, so throughout my life, I have studied and have practiced Tai- chi, I-Ching, meditation, nutrition, astrology and many other things with various Taoists, Buddhists teachers.

By examining the notion of perception, my artistic practice is a tool to decipher the laws that govern the world I live in. I create environments to generate situations where I can materialize my emotional state. Challenging the audience's own perception of what they consider real I generate a platform where I induce connection by exploring, interacting and at times by focusing on an object - place - scene for a duration of time in a manner that is both meditative and investigative. I have worked with transforming the architecture of public space, into moving walls, interactive installations with sound, light encasements, photographic tiles, and glass mosaics. These interventions create mesmerizing experiences that are also painterly in nature providing a space for temporary abstraction thus subtly transporting the mind elsewhere.

The photographic medium evolved since I was trained as a photographer from the traditional film/darkroom processes to zeros and ones, I am using the latter to generate drawings and moving paintings. The absence of tangibility incites me to simulated cutting, pasting, collaging, superimposing and layering in the production of the works. To achieve this, I consider the limitless quality of the already formatted screen and see time as a material, an endless canvas, if you will. Materiality is crucial therefore, I have developed an original way of presenting the immaterial by mounting and/or projecting onto mirrors, mylar, and slabs of sanded plexiglass. These surfaces create environments /objects that express ideas of mental constructions/situations to convey ideas of reality, such as skylines, aquariums, borders, labyrinths, oracles, and Digital looms. I am also concerned with coding/decoding information, in the origins of the history of abstraction with an ongoing pursuit to decipher reality and existential questions such as: Are destiny inherited or created? how is time perceived? Is it linear or cyclical? In what space do we find ourselves when we encounter any experience? Is the space determined by the experience, or is it the other way around, the experience determined by the space?

In recent works, expansion is taking form, I am creating content to be experienced, an amplification of consciousness through what confronts and defines every individual. Drawing from my long-standing themes of cyclical time and materialization of self-knowledge through form, I have embarked on a journey towards my origins and into the uncertainty of the technological future ahead of us. This integration has prompted me to examine textile making, generating podcasts via conversations with friends, and readings of an astrological charts as actions where the abstract language of the archetypes materializes

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in an intimate connection establishing emotional parameters by revealing the codes of the unconscious; while creating art, I materialize through form, when performing a reading instead of colors I bring to light and interpret the vibrating frequencies that are imprinted in the star maps the moment of birth. In these actions the mystical and the material coexist, rendering an opportunity for an intangible experience to manifest. In my mind, there is no distinction between all these forms of creation, for I am a firm believer that our inner nature and spirit is the ultimate determining factor of what we do in our lives and how it manifests as experience in creation and contemplation.

In my latest Public artwork, the MTA Arts commissioned 5 murals for the renovated Prospect Avenue subway station in Brooklyn. Duration places us in an abyss pulsing with vibrating waves of energy, where readability and meaning remain elusive. After Bergson's understanding of time and his concept of duration—which differentiates between the time that we measure in intervals and the time of our experience—I used color to create a material contrast, a physical experience

grounded in the circular duration of time. These compositions call forms from the history of modern abstraction intertwined with pixelated satellite images, historical maps, and photos of the nearby waterfront into glass mosaic tesserae. Oscillating between ancient and contemporary technologies, a conversation of particles emerges between tesserae and pixels. Thus, rewriting a new code between the two languages of weaving and mosaic-making, connecting perception, illusion, time, technology, and the universal.

To me, the plurality of forms, the amalgam of experience that overload our senses is the ultimate form of art since it is through the hyper-sensorial that art runs across experiences and subjectivities; the multiplicity of mediums, shapes and colors and their relation not only to our mind, but to our body is expressed through these multi-modal pieces I create.