



RAFAEL SORIANO/RAFAEL SORIANO FAMILY COLLECTION



MONICA JAHAN BOSE

FAR LEFT: Rafael Soriano's "Homage to Nicolás of Cusa" overlays a cranium and its contents and seems to be a depiction of thought itself.

LEFT: Monica Jahan Bose's "Desire (Red)" is part of the exhibition at Carroll Square Gallery. Joining Bose for "Sustenance" is Anju Chaudhuri, with whom Bose studied etching in Paris.

Poyon's exercise in magical-realist cartography. He mashed the countries of the world into a new Pangea, retaining their shapes but not their sizes and sites. This cleverly disorienting collage shrinks, twists and relocates the United States so it nestles next to Syria, Afghanistan and Botswana — but still shares a border with Mexico.

That North-South link is crucial to the show, which assembles work by 11 Latin American artists (five of whom live in the United States). Organized by Rofa Projects for George Mason University's Gillespie Gallery of Art, the exhibition features art that repurposes such symbols of national sovereignty as maps, flags and currency.

The maps include one Poyon drew on a straw hat and another,

by Mauricio Esquivel, that outlines Mexico and environs with silver eagles cut from coins. Erika Harrsch fashions obsolete paper currency, replaced by the euro, into origami butterfly specimens. She also devised a "United States of North America" passport for a traveler who crosses the continent's borders with impunity: a monarch butterfly. As it flies, it might be tracked by one of Manuela Viera Gallo's creations: carved wooden birds with cameras for heads.

Among the flags are three that Santiago Velez printed with photos of doors mounted on small barges, floating on open sea. These migration banners flutter near similarly themed works: Velez's seascapes in which ocean is represented by lengths of actual reflective emergency blankets; Nohemi Perez's

watercolors of emigres on the road; and photos of folded paper boats by Muriel Hasbun (the show's only local artist). They're metaphorical conveyances for a very real journey.

Migratory Aesthetics Through Sept. 28 at Gillespie Gallery of Art, George Mason University, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax.

Bose and Chaudhuri

Monica Jahan Bose and Anju Chaudhuri are rooted in the Bengal region, but they met in Paris, where Chaudhuri has lived for much of her 70-some years. The D.C.-based Bose studied etching there with Chaudhuri and now has brought her here for "Sustenance," at Carroll Square Gallery. The show includes individual works by both artists as well as some collaborations.

The piece with the most contributors is "Deux Degrees," a sari draped from the venue's ceiling. About 60 people, Bose says, drew or printed images and words on the garment, whose title is a reference to climate scientists' estimate of the maximum warming human civilization can survive. But two Celsius degrees may be too much for such low-lying areas as the Bay of Bengal coast, which is why Bose sometimes incorporates "1.5" into her work.

The show includes some of Chaudhuri's small oil abstracts and two videos, including Bose's poetic linkage of rice and art. More characteristic are Chaudhuri's sumptuously layered prints and tapestry-like drawings, densely packed with short, curved lines. The swirling imagery suggests water, which

Bose invokes with woodcuts of shad and one print that depicts rivers much closer to Carroll Square than to the Ganges. Bose's fish and Chaudhuri's fluid gestures unite in several pictures they made together. The two artists' ancestral homes ended up in different countries in 1947, but their styles and concerns are entirely compatible.

Sustenance: Monica Jahan Bose and Anju Chaudhuri Through Sept. 21 at Carroll Square Gallery, 975 F St. NW.

Gordana Gerskovic

Her macro lens positioned just inches from alluringly worn walls, Gordana Gerskovic photographs accidental patterns and inadvertent abstractions. The local artist's previous Foundry Gallery shows have revealed what she discovered in such places as India and her native Croatia. Her new "Mérida" is the result of a year-long stay in that city in Mexico's Yucatan. This time, she didn't return with just photos.

Gerskovic studied painting and collage in Merida, although her new pursuits don't alter her aesthetic. The title piece is a photo of cracked yellow paint, partially peeling from a mottled gray-green wall. It resembles the artist's mixed-media paintings, although the latter tend to be lighter, with watery hues. A few of them could be landscapes, viewed through mist or detail-burning sunlight. Gerskovic looks deeply, whether the vista is macro or micro.

Gordana Gerskovic: Mérida Through Sept. 29 at Foundry Gallery, 2118 Eighth St. NW.

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