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## Óncuba

El *ramo superior* circunda la línea va anterior del hueso coxal, entre el glúteo mediano, que lo cubre, y el glúteo menor sobre el cual descansa. Se distribuye en estos dos músculos.

El *ramo inferior* se dirige transversalmente de dentro a fuera, también entre el glúteo mediano y el glúteo menor; da unos filetes a estos dos músculos y va a terminar en el tensor de la

**2.º Nervio del piramidal.** — Este nervio sale de la segunda sacra y se dirige hacia el músculo piramidal, perdiéndose en la cara anterior de este músculo, inmediatamente después de salida de la pelvis (fig. 299).

En ciertos casos existen varios nervios para el músculo piramidal. Se desprende generalmente de la primera y segunda sacras, más rara vez de la tercera.

**3.º Nervio del gémينو superior.** — Este nervio se desprende de la cara anterior del plexo, cerca de su vértice. Desciende típicamente entre la espina ciática y el glúteo superior, al que pasa por su cara profunda muy cerca de la espina isquiática.

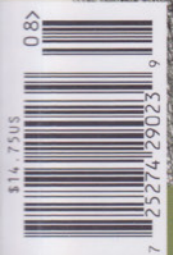
Nervio del gémينو inferior y del cuadrado cural.

1, nervio del gémينو superior. — 2, nervio glúteo superior. — 3, nervio del piramidal. — 4, nervio del gémينو inferior. — 5, nervio del cuadrado cural. — 6, nervio pudendo interno.

g, glúteo mayor. — h, glúteo mediano. — e, glúteo menor.

En otros casos, más raramente que este nervio puede provenir del obturador interno. Este último se denomina entonces *nervio del obturador interno y del gémينو inferior*.

**Nervio del gémينو inferior y del cuadrado cural.** — Este nervio sale de la quinta sacra anterior del plexo sacro, muy cerca de su vértice. Proviene ge







# Pavel Acosta: Pillage as Aesthetic Reflection

JANET BATET

“We are much less Greek than we believe.  
We are not on the stands nor on the scene,  
but in the panopticon machine, dominated by  
its power effects which we ourselves prolong,  
because we are one of its gears.”

MICHEL FOUCAULT. *Discipline and Punish.*

Towards the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a fundamental historical change in western culture took place. Together with the gestation of the national states, new modern institutions emerged concealing, behind their progressive façade, sophisticated mechanisms of social coercion. The new institutions rapidly shaped as exclusionary places on a binary system.<sup>1</sup> Because of its appropriateness with the text we are dealing with, we may highlight prisons and museums among these institutions. Both, with well differentiated roles in the exercise of authority and the regulation of the masses, are imperative because of the sense of ideological domination supporting them.

The two typologies par excellence associated with these institutions became extremely symptomatic. In the case of prisons, the Panopticon, conceived by Bentham, summarizes the system of vigilance and punishment on which our society is built. As to the museum, the asepsis of the immaculate white cube presupposes a quasi religious relationship of verticality - indispensable to the effects of the consecration of the work of art - which guarantees the subordination of the audience to the discourses legitimated by the institution, all in all echoes of the prevailing ideology.

Let us not forget that the etymological origin of museum comes from the Greek word *Museion* - house of the muses<sup>2</sup> - as the Alexandria Museum of Art, part of the Library of Alexandria, was named in the antiquity and was dedicated to them. The term, retaken in France in the Modern Age, would at the same time serve to denominate art collections (then “cabinets of curiosities”) and a select group of “illuminati” or erudite scholars who built and held knowledge.

Without having to resort to the today exceeded Panopticon, the vigilance system of the museum - extremely repressive - emphasizes once again the binary structure of exclusion on which contemporary society stands and that, in the case of culture, finds an echo in complementary concepts like center-periphery, original-copy, high-low culture, fine arts-crafts or applied arts, among others.

In its function as a guardian of culture, museums involve a selection - and exclusion - process on which our cultural heritage is built.

Pavel Acosta’s proposal, where destruction and creation go hand in hand, is just halfway between a criminal act and a work of art.

In 2008, Acosta began in Havana his series *Pinturas robadas* (Stolen Paintings). His initial motivation was economic: the lack of art materials he faced in the midst of the habitual crisis ravaging

the Island. Acosta then took on robbery as a creative tactic. Armed with a spatula, the artist went into the streets in Havana, whose dilapidated buildings seem to spit out pieces of painting, and began to scrape off here and there the layers of painting he would later integrate on the canvas or the paper as collages. Although in this series the interest was directly associated with the scarcity of resources and the black market, there was also a marked interest in one of the binary structures supporting western and, specifically, Cuban society. I am referring to memory and oblivion.


To appropriate these scraps of painting then became an act of rescue. In Cuba, since the triumph of the revolution in 1959, there has been a will to erase the past. This is verified in actions like changing the names of streets and buildings coming from the Republic, and is also translated into the conscious abandonment of the symbols of a time they want to sweep away, creating as a consequence the state of implosion characterizing the city today.

So, the series became a subversive act too: the way to give back life to fragments of a denied, silenced history.

Robbery may be delayed as a leitmotiv in Pavel Acosta’s oeuvre. Throughout the years, his actions have been addressed not to material pillage, but to a sort of anthropological one. That is also the case of the series *Stolen Spaces* the artist has been developing since 2005 in various cities throughout the world. An example of it is *Stolen Water* (Jaipur, India, 2008): inspired by the meaning of water as a vital pristine element and its shortage in that area of the planet, Acosta devotes himself to recover every wasted drop while avid people calm their thirst.

With Pavel Acosta’s arrival in New York in 2012 there was a new turn in his oeuvre. Although the context and original motivation to which *Stolen Paintings* gave rise to had disappeared, the impact of his first hand contact with vital works in art history activated in the artist a desire of appropriation that also ended in a sort of artistic pillage.

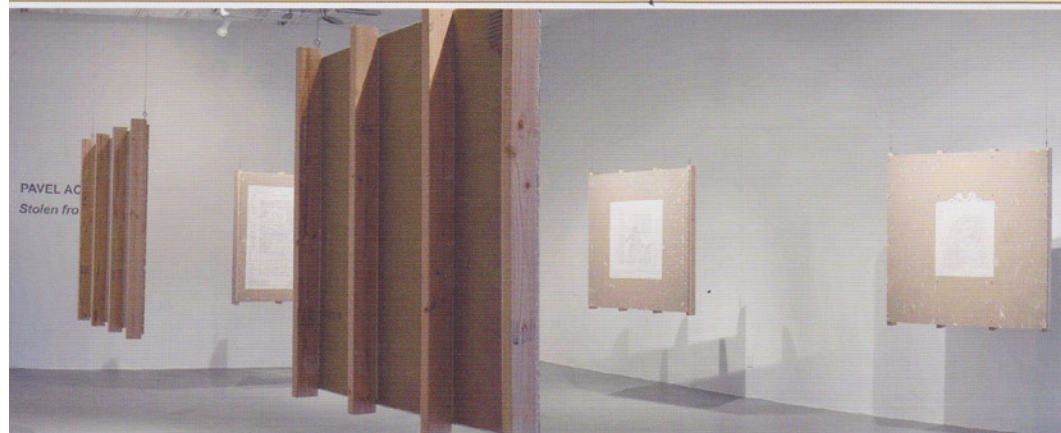
*Stolen from the Met* is the title of the first personal exhibition by Pavel Acosta in the United States. Exhibited in spring in the Zadok Gallery, in Miami, Wynwood District, it is a contribution to that line of inquiry into cultural memory - and lack of memory - obsessing the artist since early in his career. It was integrated by six works inspired in pieces by masters in the history of western art (Diego Velázquez, El Greco, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Johannes Vermeer, Pablo Picasso, and Vincent van Gogh) whom the artist admired since a student and for the first time could see in a frank dialogue in his visit to the Metropolitan Art Museum (Met). As Bernice Stejnbaum, the curator of *Stolen from the Met*, warns: these



Facing page  
Pavel Acosta working on *Wallscape*,  
Museo del Barrio, New York, 2013  
Courtesy of the artist

Panoramic view of *Wallscape*, placed before  
*Goat Song #5: Tumult on George Washington Avenue*,  
by Dominican artist Manuel Macarulla  
Museo del Barrio, New York, 2013  
Courtesy of the artist





Hanging from the space and arranged in a dialogical relationship, the group of six works creates a cube inside the cube, thus emphasizing the aporia enclosed in the exhibition.

General view of the exhibition *Stolen from the Met* / Zadok Gallery, Miami, 2014 / Courtesy of the artist

Facing page

*María Teresa (1638–1683), Infanta of Spain. By Diego Velázquez. From *Stolen from the Met* series, 2014 / Dry paint on Sheetrock / 48 x 48 inches / Courtesy of the artist*

works, together, “form a sort of phantasmagoric presence that startles and questions us.”

In this sense, the creation process and the installation of the works are fundamental.

Acosta takes pieces of walls and in a process of aggression - devastation of the wall - withdraws the immaculate coat of white plaster leaving the wood exposed. With residues of this destructive act, he then starts a process of reconstruction of the piece in question. Gradually, and as a result of this meticulous and cathartic act, these whitish specters trying to make us look “through” more than “on” the surface of the painting emerge little by little.

The museographic presentation of the pieces is crucial. Hanging from the space and arranged in a dialogical relationship, the group of six works creates a cube inside the cube, thus emphasizing the aporia enclosed in the exhibition. Access to the cube (that white cube, the metonymy of the museum space we have earlier mentioned) takes place behind the scenes. It is precisely the frame, deprived from that aural halo that is distinctive of the museum, what welcomes us laying the foundation for our perception of these works stolen from the Met.

Each of these western culture icons has been carefully recreated, respecting its dimension, the characteristics of the brushstrokes and, even, the molding in which it is exhibited today. Stripped from color, these strange murals propose an entirely different visualization of the pieces, while suggesting a questioning on their original meaning, the characters inhabiting them and the avatars unknown through time which have ended - whimsically - because of having them coexist in a same space.

The “whitening” these pieces receive also entails a questioning on the rarified presentation of the works of art in the premises of

the museum: that sort of asepsis guaranteeing the aura so dear to the myth of the original. For its part, the “whitening” suggested in *Stolen from the Met* establishes another interesting *clin d’oeil*: the one meaning the emptying of sense. A specific period in Art History deserves especial attention: Classical Antiquity, represented in the Metropolitan by more than 50 000 pieces which, as commonly happens, highlight that marmoreal and deceiving appearance that has nothing to do with the exuberant original polychromy characteristic of these pieces in their original context.

*Stolen from the Met* has an immediate precedent in *Wallscape*. Pavel Acosta’s intervention in situ when he was invited to take part in the Biennial of the Museo del Barrio in 2013.

In the execution of *Wallscape*, Acosta, in a vandalistic pose, scraped off all the coats of painting accumulated on the museum wall to then reproduce the piece that was just facing the wall assigned to him (*Goat Song #5: Tumult on George Washington Avenue*, by Dominican artist Manuel Macarulla). The symptomatic piece, which reflects on U. S. interference in Santo Domingo, added new readings to the palimpsest proposed by Acosta in which the role of the museum as an institution edifying culture and ideology is fundamental.

*Stolen from the Met* is also associated with access to culture. In Cuba, where the artist was formed, the first approach to masterpieces in History of Art takes place through reproductions, many times with wrong colors and necessarily deprived of a sense of scale. The act of pillage Acosta undertakes with these works answers first to that individual need of inquiring and rummaging - thus the need to scrape and look further away from the surface - and, then, to the desire of democratizing the oeuvre and making it accessible to others in this sort of phantasmagorical splitting now possible.

In this sense, the invitation to participate in *Caribbean: Crossroads of the World*, now open to the public in the Pérez Art Museum in Miami (PAMM) is symptomatic. After several unfruitful efforts with the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) to obtain Wifredo Lam’s *La jungla* (The Jungle, 1943) as a loan, Elvis Fuentes, the curator of the show, commissioned Acosta the appropriation of *The Jungle*. Pavel Acosta’s *The Jungle*, 2014, became an act of vindication of Cuban and Caribbean culture. Its appropriation, also, calls into question the unequal distribution of mankind cultural heritage, concentrated in a few hegemonic cultural centers. This is other of the comments implicit in *Stolen from the Met*, since none of the works was conceived by American artists or in American soil.

While the spectators wander around these works, another essential questioning strikes: who is the thief? Behind the most famous museum collections, questionable practices of cultural looting hide. Many of the pieces were obtained as war trophies and today, under the protective cloak of culture, they function as signs of consolidation of the symbolic power of their owners. Let us think, just to mention a few, about the Egyptian obelisks in the Vatican Square, the altar of Zeus in the Pergamon Museum, Ramses II bust in the British Museum, or Artemis column in the Metropolitan of New York.

As a last device, on the floor, under each piece, the QR code allows access, through a mobile device, to the digital image of the original painting in the web site of the New York Metropolitan Museum. This time, however, our perception of it will be entirely different, having first made a trip from its inside - as in a sort of radiographic look - thanks to this timely series by Pavel Acosta. ◀

1. (...) this is what disciplinary power has regularly done since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century: psychiatric institutions, penitentiaries, reformatories, the establishment of supervised education and also hospitals, and in general all the instances of individual control, function in a double way: that of binary division and marcation (insane-not insane, dangerous-inoffensive, normal-abnormal); and that of coercive allocation, of differential distribution (who he is; where should he be; why characterize him; how to recognize him; how to exercise on him, in an individual manner, a constant vigilance, and so on). In: Foucault, Michel. *Vigilar y castigar. Nacimiento de la prisión* (Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison), Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 2002, pp. 120-121.
2. “The muses, like the museums, know (or feign to know) everything: while mortals only catch a murmur, Zeus daughters, these figures of omniscience, own absolute power.” Bolaños Atienza, María. “Los museos, las musas y las masas” (The Museums, the Muses and the Masses). In: *Museo y territorio*, No. 4, 2010-2011, pp. 7-13.