

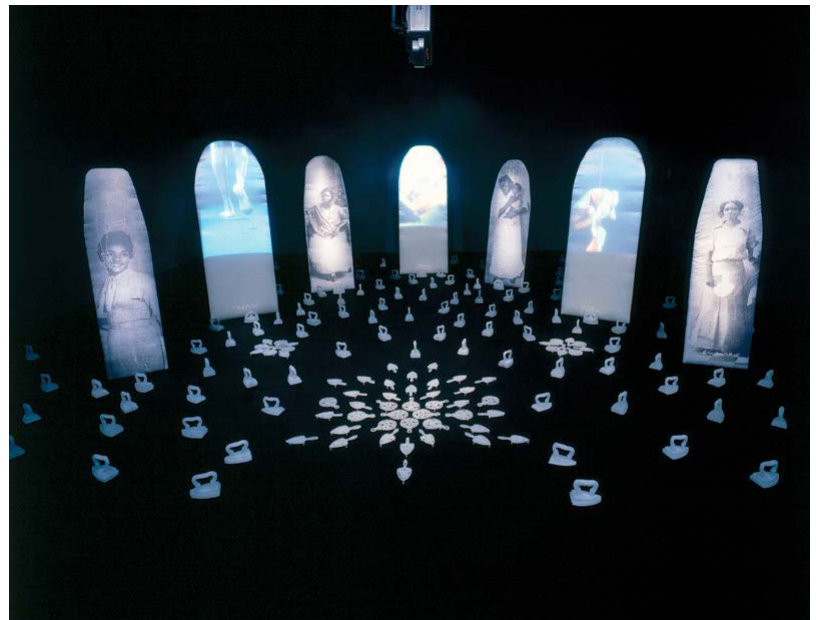
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MARIA MAGDALENA CAMPOS PONS: MY MOTHER TOLD ME

September 5-December 8, 2013

MEDFORD, MA - The Tufts University Art Gallery at the Shirley and Alex Aidekman Arts Center proudly presents **Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons: My Mother Told Me** on view from September 5 through December 8, 2013. Campos-Pons will speak about her work at Tufts on October 23, at 6:00 pm.

Internationally recognized for her large-format Polaroid photographs and immersive, multi-media environments, Boston-based, Afro-Cuban artist Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons has pioneered a distinctive aesthetic, melding photography, performance, video, sound, and sculpture. Her work has largely addressed autobiographical issues such as her relationship with her mother and with Cuba, motherhood, family, exile, and, the sugar industry and slave trade in Matanzas, her home province. She is descended from Nigerian/Yoruban, Chinese, and Hispanic ancestors and her work is infused with the spiritual traditions of her multi-ethnic heritage.



Maria Magalena Campos-Pons, *Spoken Softly with Mama*, 1998, embroidered silk and organza over ironing boards with photographic transfers, embroidered cotton sheets, cast glass irons and trivets, wooden benches, six projected video tracks, stereo sound, 8.6 x 11.7 m (installation dimensions variable), Purchased 1999, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Campos-Pons will exhibit three multi-media installations and two Polaroid photographic compositions in **My Mother Told Me**, her first museum exhibition in Boston since she immigrated from Cuba in 1989 and joined the faculty of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1991. A major installation from 1998, *Spoken Softly With Mama*, on loan from the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, will be presented for the first time in Boston. This meditative, multi-media homage to women in Campos-Pons's family is part of the series *History of a People Who Were Not Heroes*. In a darkened environment a six-channel video of the artist performing is projected onto late-19th century replica ironing boards covered with embroidered silk and organza, incorporating photographic transfers of an aunt and grandmother of the artist. On the floor are *pate de verre* irons dispersed in a configuration resembling a "collar de mazo," a Yoruban beaded necklace used in divination rituals by Atlantic slave communities. These families, including the Campos-Pons, came to Cuba from Nigeria as Spanish colonial slaves in the mid-19th century. They worked on the sugar cane plantations and as domestic servants.

My Mother Told Me also includes *Sugar/Bittersweet*, an installation comprised of antique African and Chinese wooden stools, cast glass and cast sugar, antique spears, sound, and a video featuring Omaro Portuondo, the famed Cuban female singer from the Buena Vista Social Club; *My Mother Told Me I Am Chinese*, a sculptural and video installation and a related 21-panel polaroid composition, both from 2008; and a new

eight-panel Polaroid work titled *53+1=54+1=55/Letter of the Year*, related to her eponymous installation at the 2013 Venice Biennale's Cuba pavilion.

The exhibition is organized by the Tufts University Art Gallery and is timed to celebrate the launch of the Africana Studies Program at Tufts. Several special public programs are offered in conjunction with the exhibition in coordination with Africana Studies Program faculty.

Every Thursday afternoon Tufts Professor Pearl Robinson will hold a Political Science seminar, *A World View of Race*, in the Tisch Gallery, admist ***My Mother Told Me***. This course will cover topics of race, power, and interest representation and examine struggles for Black liberation and self-determination throughout the world. The course meets on Thursdays from 1:20 to 4:20pm. The public is invited to drop in on the conversations.

To learn more about Campos-Pons's work, a special resouces page has been set up by the Tisch Library at Tufts: <http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/campos-pons>.

This exhibition is on view concurrently with a pendant exhibition, *Cuban Virtualities: New Media Art from the Island*.

PUBLIC EVENTS:

Opening Reception

Tuesday, September 10, 5:30-8:00pm
Curatorial introduction to the exhibition at 6:30pm

A World View of Race, Political Science Seminar

Taught by Tufts Professor Pearl Robinson
Every Thursday, 1:20-4:20pm, September 10th through
December 3rd
Public is invited to drop in

Parent's Weekend, Introduction to the Fall Exhibitions

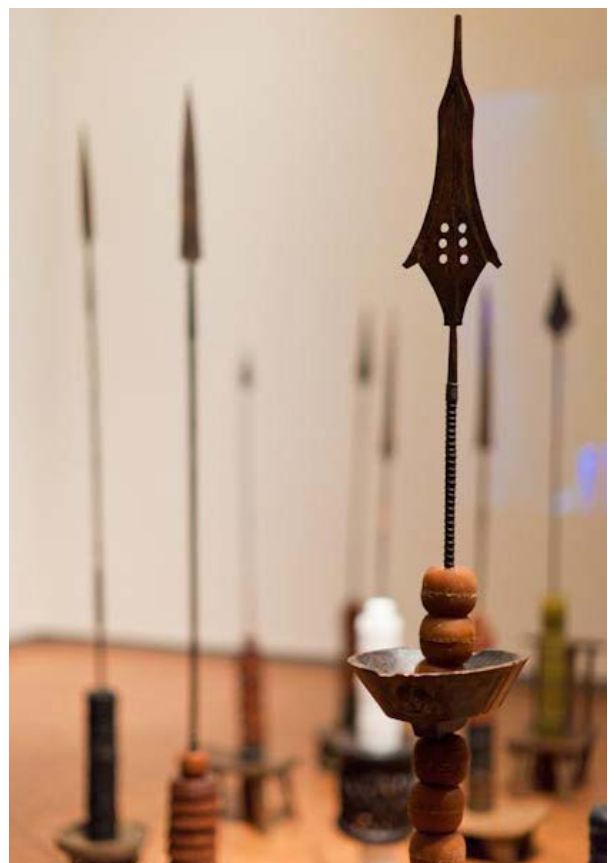
with Amy I. Schlegel, Director of Galleries and
Collections
Friday, October 4, 11:00 am

Drop-in Exhibition Tours & Participatory Activity

Saturday, October 5, 12:00-4:00pm

Artist's lecture with Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons

Wednesday, October 23, 6:00-7:30pm
Multipurpose room, Sophia Gordon Hall, 13 Talbot Ave



Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *Sugar/Bittersweet*, 2010, mixed media installation (wood, glass, raw sugar, metal, video, stereo sound), courtesy of the artist.

GALLERY HOURS :

Tuesday-Sunday 11am-5pm
Thursdays 11am-8pm

Closed for Thanksgiving break
Saturday , November 23-Monday, December 2

The Tufts University Art Gallery is fully accessible and admission is free. Suggested donation: \$3.

GALLERY CONTACTS:

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