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Written by Manuela Gabaldon

Cremata Gallery

Calle Ocho of Miami's Little Havana is home to 17 incredible galleries and spaces that house the works of recognized and emerging Cuban and Latin American artists. Cremata Gallery is one of the most established fine art galleries of the area and an active promoter of the Calle Ocho art scene. Raul Cremata, artist and president of Cremata Gallery, and director Lourdes Cremata opened the gallery in 2005 after years of prior experience as private dealers.

Their mission is simple: to promote art, to represent art, and to bring the right kind of awareness to the Calle Ocho art scene. "Events are extremely important," says Lourdes, explaining the significance of keeping the gallery active, "we host and participate in a number of events throughout the year; private collections and exhibitions by invite, informational conferences preparing collectors for seasons to come and for events such as Art Basel, and of course each month's Viernes Culturales/Cultural Fridays."

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On the last Friday of every month, people from all over Miami come to Calle Ocho to enjoy traditional Cuban music, food, and art. Cremata Gallery, firm believers in the future of the event, are working to redefine Viernes Culturales into an artistically charged night. It has been the duty of Raul Cremata, as board member of Viernes Culturales, alongside Pablo Canton, president of the board, to restructure the event and attract a newer crowd of art enthusiasts, keep the event current, and promote the existence of Little Havana's art community; "The Viernes Culturales crowd is very fun-loving and colorful. We would like to keep that upbeat vibe while at the same time welcoming a new and more art oriented public," says Raul Cremata. Director Lourdes Cremata speaks of the importance of reaching the public by advertising the event's most attractive feature, "We have galleries, restaurants, cigar stores, night clubs all in a three block area from 14th to 17th street," she says, "visitors can forget about their car and have a uniquely pedestrian experience of our community. Things are happening on Calle Ocho!" Restaurants such as El Exquisito on 1510 SW 8th Street next to the Tower Theater also work toward the same goal, presenting new and live musical talents on Viernes Culturales and promoting the event locally.

Cremata Gallery's location on Calle Ocho is a bit distant from the Art Basel scene. However, the gallery offers a step away from the crowds and into the liveliness of Cuban and Latin American art - a freshness that is sure to compliment the Basel experience. Their exhibition Abstractomicina, happening Nov 30th through Jan 30th, curated by Aldo Menendez, features the abstract works of Cuban and Latin American masters as well as abstract pieces from artists who venture into the abstract for the very first time. The show of 50 artists will be followed in January by a series of three lectures on the History of Abstract Art. Cremata Gallery is located at 1646 SW 8th Street, in the center of Little Havana.