

# DECORAZON

HUGO GARCIA URRUTIA + MK SEMOS



Daydreaming – Custom print on birch wood – 21" x 46" x 2.5" / 54 x 118 x 6 cm

## ARTIST STATEMENT | THE COLLABORATION

Working primarily in recycled substrates and materials, Hugo Garcia Urrutia and MK Semos do what they do best, unifying image and form along with celebrating world capitals, in their current, and ongoing series, Wooden Postcards.

The photographic artwork created by Semos and Garcia Urrutia in this collaborative style is a visual interpretation of an urban landscape, full of nostalgia, decay and charm, from New York City, London, Paris, and other cities around the globe, as places of inner experience as well as urban sprawl. Like a web slowly forming, these special hubs of the world act as melting pots, cradling vast amounts of cultures and ideas; Live organisms that become cultural icons themselves.

The imagery is initially created by Semos, who utilizes a manual, very basic Holga film camera, allowing her to create and manufacture intuitive collages of composition inside the camera by overlapping frames and double-exposing the film. Later, after processing the film, "story boards" are chosen from her lengthy narrative of images, signs, pop-color, and surprise code. Her cross-processing technique gives colors maximum saturation.

What Semos' imagery seems to lack in people, is actually all about people. It describes how congregations move, whispers of what they create, and implies the energetic footprint they've left behind. The work is taken to another level with the expert effort of Garcia Urrutia, as he experiments with different un-orthodox substrates and photographic finishes. The imagery is integrated with reclaimed hardwood floors in this case, allowing the viewer to experience the grains and truest colors of the wood; the quality and grains of the wood becoming part of the image composition. The recycled hardwood floor is also evocative of the high volume imagery that the viewer can see in the artwork itself, reminding one of the concentrated effort of foot-traffic associated with the worn footprint that we all leave behind.

In 2011, this collaborative team earned and completed an artist in residency with the luxe Fairmont Hotel chain, where they produced artwork in-house and lived in a penthouse upstairs, in the Fairmont's

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downtown Dallas location. Later that same year, they moved to London. They now divide their time between the UK and the States.

Hugo Garcia Urrutia and MK Semos first collaborated in 2005, when they did a public art project in the form of a life-size photography art installation in the newly constructed Rosemont Primary School, Chris V. Semos campus in Dallas, Texas. They have been collaborating ever since.

## HUGO GARCIA URRUTIA

A graduate and active member of the Architectural Association's Master of Architecture Design & Make programme in the United Kingdom, Urrutia's work creates a distinct spatiality located at the interstice of art and architecture. His work explores and uses the technology for design and fabrication, with a sensitive and conscious reminder of the creativity of human endeavor.

Urrutia graduated from Texas Tech University in 2000, with a Bachelor of Architecture and Design and received the 2000 *Outstanding Thesis Award*. In 2004 he founded Decorazon Gallery in Dallas' historic Bishop Arts District where he directed, curated and exhibited numerous art/architectural exhibitions for national and international artists. His personal artwork has been exhibited in the United States, United Kingdom, Thailand, Colombia, Hong Kong. His participation in art and architectural competitions and public projects include; the AIA Cincinnati, where he received the Design Award for the 2000 National Urban Poetry I competition and the 2005 ARQUINE - International Architecture Competition in Mexico City. His art installation – *The Mexican Tsunami*, and *Making a Killing* – have both been featured at the Art Santa Fe 2010 Contemporary Art Fair, curated by Charlotte Jackson, and University of Dallas and the McKinney Avenue Contemporary (MAC) in Dallas curated by Charissa N. Terranova. Most recently he presented the *Fallen Star* at the Architectural Association Back Member's Room with the AA DLab 2012 team. Through his art installations he has been developing a series of conceptual and political messages that respond to Mexico's rising acts of violence and challenges the country faces.

He is interested in strong concept and exploring different mediums by conveying his message in a very indirect format, while creating visual simulation for the viewer.

## MK SEMOS

Greek-American photographer MK Semos is a highly committed professional whose deep appreciation of beauty and culture can be found in each of her photographs. She specializes in travel, portrait, and environmental art photography, but is most well known for her 15+ years of work with the Holga camera. Born in Dallas, Texas, she earned Bachelor Degrees in Journalism, Photojournalism and Photo-Illustration from the University of Texas at Austin in 1995. Semos' love and devotion to travel translates directly into the kinetic energy one feels while viewing her images. She has freelanced for *New York Magazine*, *Business Traveler* and *Timeout NY*, and her artwork has been highlighted and reviewed in publications as *The Dallas Morning News*, *Daily Candy*, and the *Bangkok Post*. Semos describes herself as a self-realized New Yorker, after 15 years living in The City, and immediately fell in love with London. She continues to create urban imagery while operating the Decorazon Gallery as co-owner, and is also on the Board for the Association of Women Art Dealers (AWAD), who have chapters in London and New York.

The collaborative team has exhibited artwork in numerous art fairs including the Aqua Art Fair, Miami (2010), Suite Art Fair, Dallas (2011), Affordable Art Fair Battersea London (2011-2016), Affordable Art Fair Hong Kong (2012-2016), Affordable Art Fair Brussels (2012-2013), SCOPE Miami Beach (2014), The London Art Fair (2015-2016), along with having solo exhibitions: *Wooden Postcards* February/ March 2011, *Bangkok*; *Happy Endings* sponsored by the Fairmont Hotel Dallas, 2011, *360 Grados* in Bogota, Colombia, 2015.