

CONTEMPORARY ARTS PROJECT

A new program that builds on Vizcaya's history as a place of creative exchange, the Contemporary Arts Project engages artists to develop site-specific installations at this National Historic Landmark estate.

In 2006, Miami-based artist Gustavo Matamoros presented his sound installation titled *Organic Pipes* and in spring 2007, New York-based artist Anna Gaskell unveiled *Still Life*, a site-specific installation filmed at Vizcaya.

Concurrent with Cristina Lei Rodriguez's installation, Chicago-based artist Catherine Sullivan exhibits her multi-channel film installation *Triangle of Need*, on view from November 29, 2007 – February 24, 2008.

For more information about the **Contemporary Arts Project** and related public programs at Vizcaya, please visit www.vizcayamuseum.org or call 305-250-9133.

Vizcaya Museum & Gardens

3251 South Miami Avenue
Miami, FL 33129

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Photos by Mariano C. Peuser



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STRUGGLING FOR GRANDEUR BY CRISTINA LEI RODRIGUEZ

NOVEMBER 8, 2007 – FEBRUARY 24, 2008

STRUGGLING FOR GRANDEUR

*A site-specific installation by Miami-based artist
Cristina Lei Rodriguez*

In *Struggling for Grandeur*, Cristina Lei Rodriguez reinterprets topiaries found in Vizcaya's formal gardens to create an eight-foot-tall sculpture for the Tea Room. Using inexpensive materials such as plastic and artificial plants to achieve a sense of beauty and grandeur, Rodriguez paradoxically mirrors Vizcaya founder James Deering's vision through a twenty-first-century lens, referencing the struggle between natural elements and human intervention and the dynamic process of growth and decay. Intentionally sculpted to imperfection, *Struggling for Grandeur* represents the challenge of maintaining an ideal, neoclassical image amid the harsh realities of a subtropical climate.



Given the opportunity to situate the sculpture in any location on Vizcaya's grounds, Rodriguez selected the Tea Room for its ornate décor and garden views. With highly decorative neoclassical murals and inlaid marble floors, the Tea Room echoes the sculpture's intricate detail. Vizcaya's stained glass doors offer views of the formal gardens that provide the source imagery for Rodriguez's large sculpture and create a dialogue between interior and exterior spaces.

Struggling for Grandeur is the latest in a series of works exploring the ongoing conflict between nature and human efforts to civilize and constrain. Commenting on the futility of imposing order on nature, Rodriguez covers mass-produced faux materials with oozing plastic. *Struggling for Grandeur* underscores the transitory nature of civilization's triumphs and the potential for its decline.



ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Born in Miami in 1974, Cristina Lei Rodriguez received a B.A. from Middlebury College in 1996 and an M.F.A. from California College of Arts in 2002. She has two upcoming solo shows in 2008—one with Team Gallery (New York) and another with Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin (Miami). Rodriguez was selected to participate in a group show highlighting forty young American artists, *Uncertain States of America*. The exhibition has traveled extensively to sites including Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art (Oslo), Bard Center for Curatorial Studies (New York), Serpentine Gallery (London), Herning Museum of Art (Denmark). Rodriguez has also exhibited her work at Deitch Project (New York), Mary Boone Gallery (New York), Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin (Paris), The Rubell Family Collection (Miami) and The Moore Space (Miami). Rodriguez currently lives and works in Miami.