

# P O R T F O L I O

## Music biennial opens tonight with Frente exhibit

By ENEID ROUTE GOMEZ  
Of The Star Staff

An exhibit of paintings and sculptures by Frente will kick off the island's First Biennial of Contemporary Music tonight at the Art Students League in Old San Juan.

Described as a "salute" to the Puerto Rico Society of Contemporary Composers, organizer of the biennial, the exhibit will include works by Frente artists' Paul Camacho, Luis Hernandez Cruz, Antonio Navia, Lopez Max Diaz, Gabriel Martinez, Jaime Suarez, Oscar Mestey and Carlos Suenos.

The exhibit opens at 8 p.m. and will extend through Nov. 9.

Noted musicians and composers from Puerto Rico, Latin America and the United States are scheduled to take part in the month-long biennial which will extend through Dec. 1.

They include U.S. soprano Victoria Villamil, clarinetist Laura Flax, The Performers' Committee for 20th Century Music, harpist Maritza Bolano, pianist and composer Gerardo Gandini, composer-conductor Eduardo Kusnir and composer Silvestre Revueltas.

Island performers include violinist Guillermo Figueroa Jr. and guitarist Ernesto Cordero.

Contemporary music by John Cage and Henry Cowell and songs by Stravinsky, Satie and Poulenc will be aired during the biennial as well as compositions by island composers Amaury Veray, Luis Manuel Alvarez, Rafael Aponte-Ledee, Ernesto Cordero, Francis Schwartz, Carlos Vazquez and Jack Delano, among others.

In addition to the Frente exhibit, the biennial will also have on view two art shows, a poetry recital, a play and four lectures.

On Nov. 16 and exhibit of drawings by Juan Ramon Velazquez opens at San Sebastian gallery. The same evening works by Luis Hernandez Cruz will be on display at Botello gallery, also in Old San Juan.

On Nov. 22, Guajana will give a poetry recital at Coabey gallery.

On Nov. 28, Bertoldt Brecht's "The



The Performers' Committee for 20th Century Music: pianists Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, soprano Sheila Schonbrun, flutist Jayn Rosenfeld, Violinist Guillermo Figueroa Jr., Soprano Victoria Villamil, Clarinetist Laura Flax, Composer Rafael Aponte-Ledee, Composer-guitarist Ernesto Cordero.

Caucasian Chalk Circle" will be staged at the University of Puerto Rico Theater under the direction of Gilda Navarra.

Lectures by professors Roger Martinez, Arturo Echevarria and Tomas Marco are also planned, though no dates have yet been set.

Concerts will be held at the Institute of Culture's patio theater, UPR, the Conservatory of Music and the San Juan Cathedral.

New Puerto Rican Music, the first of 12

concerts in the biennial, will be performed Friday at 8 p.m. at UPR with Ernesto Cordero as featured soloist.

The second concert will take place Sunday at the Institute of Culture's patio theater beginning at 5 p.m. The concert will feature songs by Satie, Stravinsky and Poulenc.

The Puerto Rican Society of Contemporary Composers is presided by Rafael Aponte-Ledee.



## Art: Sylvia Blanco's clay sculptures at Manos Gallery

By FELIX BONILLA NORAT  
Special To The STAR

It's a sculpture!

No! It's an arm, it can kill a man! It is both: it's one of Sylvia Blanco's pieces of sculptural ceramics now at Manos Gallery in the Condado Convention Hall. One of them was recently knocked over and it scarred a stand thrice before it fell and rebounded on the floor, intact. Thirty similar very intact pieces will be on view until November 10.

So much intactness is due to the architectural design of the ceramic pieces. They stand up like buildings. Monolithic, they seem, because Sylvia has a sense of gravity and an intuition for slab-thickness and pyramidal togetherness. Thus her pieces can stand stresses beyond porcelain bibelots; should she be more daring with air-borne forms, delicate thin slabs? Should she push clay to its limits?

"The forms are fragile as it is" Sylvia says. "As a matter of fact, I intend to break one on the head of my husband as soon as I get home. He is an auto mechanic and yet my car just got stuck. Again and again it gets stuck; he comes and bangs a thing and 'it' works, 'it' is laughing at me. Yes, clay



SYLVIA BLANCO

breaks: it is part of its beauty. A nostalgic beauty. Yet clay is in its way more permanent than anything man can make, more permanent than any metal. It can transcend mankind itself if we don't watch out."

I shiver at the idea of a dead planet with no humans, no metals but plenty of sculptural ceramics left around. Imagine Manos or any other art gallery without people and with the lonely art objects standing as mute witnesses forever...

"The age of the disposables is at hand. Nothing is permanent," Sylvia continues. "Our lives, our arts are disposable. There's no limit to human endurance, yet we make allowances for it every day. Thus, with ceramics there's no limit to their eternity but you have to watch out for them just the same."

"Why do I like clay? It is plastic, it is flexible, it is abundant in Puerto Rico, therefore more economical I resent what you said about us in your Muestra Nacional review, that we use clay for sculptures because it is easy, that we evade metal or stone because they are harder work. Clay isn't easy. Many things can go wrong in its processing. Firing clay can be a torture. So much so I am

thinking of ending up by using cast concrete for sculpturing."

Sylvia Aponte de Blanco in her personal choices is thus a psychical medium of Puerto Ricanness: we are a plastic people, ever in the process of status definition, flexible so as to be able to fight our eternal "pelea monga" (limp fight) in our very open society; very abundant per square mile, though maybe not as economical as clay. Our human clay is quite easy going but many things can go wrong in its processing, thus torturing our forefathers and would-be saviours.

We are here to stay permanently, thus we prefer cast concrete houses because they too are permanent, and they are quicker and cheaper to put up than brick or stone. Wood is still suspect because, since it is imported, it is expensive, and it is also pollita prone.

Piecemeal we accept the above things as Sylvia does - but we resent it if somebody puts an overall or consistent mirror of ourselves in front of us; since the mirror image could become fixed historically. Even though as true contrabandists we suspect history is a liar, we fear the picture it can paint of us: the "policeman" could catch us through such

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