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# Planting the Seeds of Surreality, Cultivating the Dynamism of a Nation: Winston Miranda and the Rhetoric of Resilience in Post-Revolutionary Nicaraguan Art

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# PLANTING THE SEEDS OF SURREALITY, CULTIVATING THE DYNAMISM OF A NATION: WINSTON MIRANDA AND THE RHETORIC OF RESILIENCE IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY NICARAGUAN ART

**BY**

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THESIS

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# DEDICATION

~To my mother,
the Biggest Peetsie of them all,
with love

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## ABSTRACT

Winston Miranda, a surrealist painter from the historic capital of Granada, Nicaragua, is creating a contemporary, post-revolutionary path that is distinct from yet informed by its revolutionary antecedents. In essence, his art is a literal and figurative bridge between war and healing. Critical research to date, however, has not considered the rhetorical implications of the role of art in Nicaragua after the revolutionary period (1990 to the present day).

Henceforth, my thesis is a pentadic criticism of the post-revolutionary components of Miranda's surrealist oil paintings. By aggregating the literal and latent content of Miranda's artworks as a collective drama and performance, I was able to

locate and extract key act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose elements across three layers of pentads: Dream, Play, and Lived World. I ultimately reveal the artist's underlying motivation in engendering resilience for himself, his country, and the world.

My analytical tool is based primarily upon Kenneth Burke's (1969a) theory of dramatism, with components of art therapy and psychoanalysis incorporated to capture the overall essence of the painting aggregate. I also utilize Walter Benjamin's (1968) notion of translation to facilitate explanation of the ways in which Miranda navigates from pentad to pentad via translatory tools of historic artistic voices, the 4,000-year old world-renowned performance art of puppetry, and audience participation, respectively.

What ultimately emerges from the analysis of Miranda's surrealist paintings is an understanding of the symbolic nature of not only recovery, but above all resilience from trauma across a plethora of experiential fronts and how this regenerative healing may be conveyed through visual imagery. I conclude this thesis by propounding the major rhetorical strategies suggested by the role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua and how surrealism might function to mediate those strategies and negotiate a world that is increasingly becoming more visual in its communicative practices.

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*Art should never try to be popular. The public should try to make itself artistic.*
~Oscar Wilde, Irish playwright and poet (1923, p. 30)

*An* objet d'art *creates a public that has artistic taste and is able to enjoy beauty—and the same can be said for any other product. Productivity accordingly produces not only an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object.*
~Karl Marx, German radical philosopher (1975, p. 30)

*I believe that artists paint the moment in which they live…By painting "in the moment," we immortalize that time; we share it with people of the present and future.*
~Winston Miranda, Nicaraguan surrealist painter (personal communication, July 23, 2007)

July 19, 1979 has forever been painted upon the world's recollection of Nicaragua's revolutionary past. Great artistic strides were made in order to establish the Sandinista-inspired revolution as one unique from all the rest.[1] And indeed it was. But since that time, Nicaragua has experienced decades more trauma than the revolutionary state ever could have anticipated. Consequently, the role and inspirational sources of art have shifted accordingly, and Nicaragua now stands at the threshold of a new era.

Winston Miranda (see Figure 1), a surrealist painter from the historic capital of Granada, is creating a contemporary, post-revolutionary path that is distinct from yet informed by its revolutionary antecedents. Miranda grew up in the port city of San Carlos, the channel site to the Solentiname Islands where a revolutionary artists' community, led by Ernesto Cardenal, was established.[2] In essence, Miranda's art is a literal and figurative bridge between revolution and renewal and, concomitantly, is the

[1] In the words of Sergio Ramírez, vice-president of Nicaragua from 1984 to 1990, "We don't want our revolution to become gray, orthodox…We don't see our revolution as a copy of any other. We don't believe that the problems of Nicaragua can be solved by merely copying other models" (as cited in Craven, 1988, p. 51).

[2] Poet and progressive priest Ernesto Cardenal mobilized approximately 1,000 *campesinos* [peasants] to paint and write poetry as subversion against the Somoza dictatorship (Craven, 1988). Cardenal was later appointed the Minister of Culture in 1979 after the revolutionary success of the Sandinistas.

*Figure 1*- La Creación del Arte. *Self-portrait by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, Managua, Nicaragua, 2007.)

inspiration and focus of the present study. Through the analysis of Miranda's work, I hope to contribute a critical inquiry of art and of its power to engender transformation.

The present chapter, then, shall function as the introduction to my journey. I shall focus on the historical background of post-revolutionary Nicaraguan art, my study's context of inquiry, the key concepts navigating my research endeavors, an overview of the theoretical frameworks of the present investigation, and a preview of subsequent chapters.

**Nicaragua, Art, and the "Revolution of Poets": Historical Background**

During Nicaragua's revolutionary years of the 1960s and 70s, art was used strategically in order to raise consciousness, empower, and unify the people in resistance against a brutal dictatorship (Craven, 1988, 2002; Kunzle, 1995). Politics revolved around identity and culture as *campesinos* and *bourgeoisie* collectively gathered their rifles and paintbrushes (LaDuke, 1984) against the Somoza regime. The movement's dialogical[3] foundations engendered a social synthesis of high art with popular culture and, consequently, created a multifaceted cultural matrix of artistic ability, style, and background (Craven, 1988). What was inherent in what has been called a "revolution of poets" (Craven, 1988, p. 51) was the art-inspired infusion of self, community, nation, and world.

When the Sandinistas came to power on July 19, 1979, several internationally renowned cultural developments were implemented across Nicaragua. Besides the

[3] This dialogical approach was inspired by Brazilian educator Paolo Freire. Freire (1970/1993) writes, "A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice *co-intentional* education. Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of *re-creating* that knowledge…In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement" (p. 69; my emphasis for the latter).

remarkably successful educational campaign in 1980, which raised national literacy from 50 percent to nearly 90 percent (and rightly earned the Nicaraguan government a special award from the United Nations), the nationwide network of *Talleres de Poesía* [Poetry Workshops], the national system of *Centros Populares de Cultura* [Popular Centers of Culture], and the globally recognized rejuvenation of mural art functioned to promote critical inquiry into the liberational potential (role) of art and its relationship to the people as a whole. According to Craven (2002), "Nicaraguan culture in general and its arts in particular came to mean something [much] more intellectually complex, yet, paradoxically, also [much] more publicly intelligible" (p. 119), than simply a mirror of the nation's realities. In other words, art does not merely reflect reality, it creates it, and the emancipatory victory of the revolutionary state—of the people—manifests this hard-fought claim.

The onslaught of the U.S.-backed Contra war (counterrevolutionary war) signified a shift in the way Nicaraguans used art relative to resistance. With the chill of the Cold War still fresh in the air, the Reagan administration treated the Sandinista victory as a threatening extension of Soviet-backed communism (Walker, 1997). Nicaraguans (for instance, Carlos Sánchez Arias and Manuel García) responded by creating art like that of the Dutch surrealist painter Hieronymus Bosch (1450-1516), whose work portrays hellish scenes of damnation and dismemberment.[4] Nicaraguans[5] utilized symbolic elements of

[4] I recommend Reid's (1990) cluster criticism of Bosch's *The Hay-Wain* to explain how individuals establish the meanings of ambiguous messages.

[5] I shall refrain from using the term "Nicaraguan artists" and instead use the more general term of "Nicaraguans" to designate the united role in art that the nation at large created, not just those persons who were already "pre-established" as artists. The message of the revolution was that not only could anyone be an artist, but also that this role is necessary for freedom from state-employed oppression.

these types[6] to expose and comment on Reagan's Contra death squads, which by the mid-1980s had already resulted in over 40 thousand murders and billions of dollars in infrastructural damage (Craven, 2002).

That surrealism was used to challenge and resist U.S. influence/invasion makes it a subject worthy of consideration from a communication standpoint. The nightmarish images prevalent within the context of yet another war have significant implications for how art may be used rhetorically to bridge the space between psyche and society and how this art-bridge may shed light on understanding social movement and recovery[7] dynamics. As I will elaborate upon in the key concepts section of this chapter and in the middle section of Chapter 2, the role of surrealist art, in the words of Rosemont (1978), "aims at nothing less than complete human [psychic] emancipation [and] the reconstruction of society governed by the watchword *To each according to his* [*or her*] *desire*" (p. 1). To that end, the philosophical and practical endeavors of surrealism can be described as an individual-collective suture between socially constructed and imposed "contradictions between sleeping and waking, dream and action, reason and madness, the conscious and the unconscious, the individual and society, the subjective and the objective" (Rosemont, 1978, p. 1) where that suture facilitates emancipation and reconstruction according to one's desire.

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[6] Not to say, however, that all artwork during the Contra war was surrealist. As previously alluded to, the high art-popular culture synthesis of the Sandinista dialogical approach served as a cultural matrix to cultivate a variety of artistic styles and genres.

[7] In order to define "recovery," I must first conceptualize the notion of "trauma." As Carey (2006) expresses, "Trauma covers any situation where one's psyche is overwhelmed to the point that the person is unable to use his or her usual psychological defenses, or to function in the usual fashion" (p. 15). Recovery, then, is the process by which particular and varying methods and activities are used to restore, repair, and heal one's psyche from trauma. Needless to say, trauma and recovery are dialectically related.

Nicaragua's surrealist inclinations toward psyche-society collaboration, especially within the context of unrelenting trauma (trauma from dictatorship, trauma from war, trauma from U.S. invasion, trauma from natural disaster, namely the earthquake of 1972 and Hurricane Mitch,[8] trauma from *machismo*, and trauma from poverty), also suggest a way to understand the role of art as a method of recovery. Art therapist Judith Rubin (2006) explains, "From time immemorial, people of all ages have turned to play and to the arts to deal not only with the stresses of everyday life, but also to cope with trauma-experiences that are too overwhelming for the ego to assimilate" (p. 9). Nicaragua's art-centered revolutionary strategies of consciousness-raising, empowerment, and solidarity can serve as a platform from which to understand art as a site of rhetorical resistance and as a means by which a country can move forward after a period of trauma and disaster.

To that end, I am interested in the communicative nature of the role of art in Nicaragua today: How has the role of Nicaraguan art evolved since its revolutionary origins? In what ways has the function of surrealism changed and what might this transformation imply for the creation and practice of new communication strategies? In what ways does the role of art as recovery function to mediate between Nicaragua's past and present?

Specifically, how might these questions be investigated through the artwork of Winston Miranda? What can Miranda's art suggest for a historical, political, and social transformation of Nicaragua? In what ways can his creation relate to an international context of art and social movement? And, ultimately, what does the centrality of art as a

[8] For instance, Goenjian, Molina, Steinberg, Fairbanks, Alvarez, Goenjian, and Pynoos (2001) analyze the posttraumatic stress and depressive reactions among Nicaraguan adolescents after the Hurricane Mitch disaster.

rhetorical manifestation of self, culture, and society imply for both critical-visual communication and the place of art in envisioning and cultivating a new kind of world?

## Context

Art, like agency, is "promiscuous and protean" (Campbell, 2005). Not only do art genres and art media evolve over time, but symbols, meanings, and messages associated with such works transform as well. Not only can revolutionary Nicaraguan art be interpreted and, most importantly, acted upon in a new light, but it can also be reinscribed in such a manner as to stimulate a renewed sense of agency in the people of Nicaragua. However, no current scholarship has made the transition from investigation and discussion of art during Nicaragua's revolutionary epoch to exploration and understanding of how post-revolutionary art can be used to facilitate such agency today. Thus, it is paramount that a re/new/ed lens be constructed to view and explain what kinds of roles transpire that enable this aesthetic transformation/reproduction to take place.

One of the more salient sites of intersection between role and art is that of rhetoric. Artistic creations and manifestations have been considered central elements of rhetorical function, rhetorics of the margins, and the like. Surprisingly, however, the study of art in terms of visual communication—non-discursive communication—has been a relatively recent undertaking (especially given rhetoric's rich history, dating all the way back to fifth century BCE in the West). The formal study of visual communication can be said to have begun with the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism which recommended that, "rhetorical criticism must broaden its scope to examine the full range of rhetorical transactions; that is, informal conversations, groups settings, mass media messages, picketing, sloganeering, chanting,

singing, marching, gesturing, ritual, institutional and cultural symbols, cross-cultural transactions and so forth" (Sloan, Gregg, Nilsen, Rein, Simons, Stelzner, & Zacharias, 1971, p. 225). As Foss and Radich (1980) suggest, art and its role as visual communication is within the scope of rhetoric because it is a "conscious production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, and other elements in a manner that affects or evokes a response" (p. 41).

The more recent contributions to visual communication as rhetoric include, but are certainly not limited to, Foss's (1988) feminist analysis of Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* to explicate the ways submerged groups can use art to empower their own perspectives; Gallagher and Zagacki's (2005) generative analysis of Norman Rockwell's civil rights art to demonstrate how visual images can function to articulate and evoke a common humanity in a people; Makagon's (2000) generative criticism of Jenny Holzer and Krzysztof Wodiczko's public art to elucidate how alternative media in general and critical public art in particular can function to disrupt traditional cultural understandings of media and how this functionality can be used to reimagine alternative uses of media and space; McCormick and Weiss's (2004) fantasy-theme criticism of a mural in the parking lot of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to explain how subversive art can be used to articulate socially acceptable views of controversial issues; and Reid's (1990) cluster criticism of Hieronymus Bosch's *The Hay-Wain* to illustrate how viewers establish the meanings of ambiguous messages.

My purpose, then, is to build upon these studies in order to deepen the understanding of the intimate relationship between art and rhetoric and visual image. In

essence, I seek to contribute to the scholarship of critical-visual communication as well as to the specific domain of post-revolutionary art as rhetorical.

Consequently, such contributions entail developing a map, blueprint, and even compass to locate and navigate new theoretical-practical paths toward understanding how art can be used rhetorically not only to resist oppressive forces, but also to move through and beyond critique and challenge to new dimensions of creativity and dream. As Anzaldúa (2002) states,

> Breaking out of your mental and emotional prison and deepening the range of perception [through art] enables you to link reflection and vision—the mental, emotional, instinctive, imaginal, spiritual, and the subtle bodily awareness—with social, political action and lived experiences to generate subversive knowledges. (p. 542)

To date, however, few studies have been devoted to "breaking out" of critique to move beyond oppressive realities—precisely the goal of the present thesis.[9] Given the prominence of art as a revolutionary process in Nicaragua, I suggest that Nicaragua is a prime site for investigating the possibilities of recovery and challenge that can emerge from art and its evolution from revolution to post-revolution.

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[9] Even so, scholars working in the phenomenological tradition of reader/audience response paradigms have long been theorizing about transformative characteristics of texts. For instance, Iser (1978) argues that a literary text's indeterminacies provoke the reader into a more actively and selectively imaginative frame of mind that may then facilitate a realization of the possibilities inherent in yet repressed by conventional structural norms of society. This provocative realization is able to transpire because the reader co-constructs, via a constant revision of past impressions of the text, rather than simply takes in the text's performance (meaning/signified). Even still, de Certeau (1984) elucidates how everyday life practices may function to subvert dominant discourses. In this sense, de Certeau conceptualizes consumption as a secondary form of production in which people can utilize/reformulate imposed structural conditions as resources to creative a "new" type of space. Both Iser's and de Certeau's ideas are necessarily imbricative of Benjamin's (1968) theories of art as auratic and translation. Questions on how and why this collaboration occurs and is important, in addition to an elaboration, application, and extension of Benjamin's concepts, will be further addressed in Chapter 4's findings and analysis.

## Key Concepts

The key terms at the core of the present study—art, post-revolution, post-revolutionary art, and surrealism—can be and have been conceptualized in many ways. I consider these concepts to be fluid and ongoing, that is, evolved from studies and experiences before me and hopefully extended and adapted by studies and experiences that will follow. In other words, they are critical operationalizations set forth for the purposes of the present study and are open to change.

### *Art*

*Art* is performance, enactment, production, and expression of a particular viewpoint or viewpoints and evokes and inspires re/action in thought and/or deed. As alluded to in the Miranda epigraph of this chapter, art is a function of "the moment;" a way paradoxically to preserve yet transform the time and space of human condition. Art is *not* a (passive) product *solely* of or for consumption. On the contrary, it is a reflexive and re/generative product where the response of the viewer is essential for an artwork to live on. Moreover, art may be an agency of the oppressed (not an exclusive embellishment of the privileged or reservation of the "talented") and a means by which to create liberatory space-time (Adorno, 1991; Benjamin, 1968; Burke, 1964, 1966; Foss & Radich, 1980; Marx, 1975; Miranda, personal communication, July 23, 2007; Wilde, 1923).

### *Post-Revolution*

In relation to Nicaragua, the post-revolutionary time frame roughly begins with the 1990 Sandinista-party defeat by United National Opposition (UNO) coalition

representative Violeta Chamorro[10] and extends to the present day. The UNO victory was detrimental to the infrastructure of the nation. For instance, in less than a year after the party's "democratic triumph," the illiteracy rate had risen dramatically (approximately 25 percent) due to the semi-privatization of the school system, which meant leaving about 120,000 children untaught. In the meantime, Managua mayor Arnoldo Alemán spearheaded the destruction of revolutionary public murals, one of his most infamous being that of the *Canales* commemoration mural of the literacy campaign (Kunzle, 1995). According to Craven (personal communication, January 17, 2008), the purpose of the revolutionary murals was to remake literally and figuratively "the visual environment…by and for the popular classes to celebrate a new conception of themselves." In essence, then, tearing down those murals embodied a symbolic whitewashing of that celebration and conception. Forebodingly, in 1997, directly following Chamorro's presidency, Alemán became the nation's new leader under the banner of the *Partido Liberal Constitucionalista* (PLC; Constitutionalist Liberal Party) and extended and reinvigorated the neoliberal free-market trend that the UNO helped facilitate.

However, one of the most important elements to note in this brief contextual framework for the post-revolution definition to follow is that of Daniel Ortega's[11]

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[10] Chamorro was the first woman to ever have been elected as president in Nicaragua. Given her gender, one might be inclined to reason that certain policies would be implemented to improve the lives (e.g. working conditions) of Nicaraguan women. However, just the opposite transpired. For an explanation of how the Chamorro victory was intricately connected with the rise of neoliberalism and structural adjustment policy-induced changes in women's conditions and gender relations, see Metoyer's (2000) *Women and the State in Post-Sandinista Nicaragua*.

[11] Following the defeat of the Somoza regime, Ortega became the president of Nicaragua from 1985-1990. For most of his life, Ortega has been a leading voice of the Sandinista party and inevitably an advocate for development of the arts. It is very interesting to see, then, the ways in which his current political discourse

reelection in December 2006. According to Fernando Cardenal,[12] Ortega's presidency has not meant a resurrection of 1979 revolutionary politics or spirit (personal communication, August 1, 2007), and certainly not the resurrection of channels that helped create a voice for/of/by the people. Ortega's position has only evidenced a double-talk of "leftist speeches with indulgent rightwing politics, [where he promises] a new economic, social and political model to free Nicaragua from the international institutions and set up a 'direct democracy' in which the 'people are the President'" (Nitlapán-Envío Team, May 2007, retrieved July 2, 2007, pp. 1, 6) on one hand, and on the other a pact with Alemán that has only promoted a culture of corruption and impunity. For example, on October 26, 2006, just ten days before the country's presidential elections, the Nicaraguan legislature[13] passed a new law prohibiting abortion on all levels, including cases where the mother's life is in danger, the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, and/or severe fetal malformation is detected. Ortega and the entire Sandinista Party legislative bench voted for the new law and, consequently, later went on to win the election with solid support from Catholic and Evangelical church leaders (Replogle, January 2007).[14]

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and actions retrospectively appropriate artistic elements of the revolution, but, nevertheless, do not manifest a people's standpoint.

[12] Fernando Cardenal is the brother of Ernesto Cardenal. Fernando was the Minister of Education during the revolution and was one of the forerunners of the literacy campaign. I had the honor of being a part of an informal discussion with him that was organized by a student from the *Universidad Centroamericana* in Managua, whose family is close friends with the Cardenals and who is currently studying at the University of New Mexico, during my stay in Nicaragua from July 9 until August 2, 2007.

[13] The Nicaraguan president who signed the new abortion bill into law was none other than Enrique Bolaños of the *Alianza por la República* [APRE; Alliance for the Republic]. Bolaños served as president of Nicaragua from January 2002 to January 2007.

[14] In a similar vein, both Ecuador and Chile have abortion laws parallel to Nicaragua's (Craven, personal communication, January 17, 2008). As with Chamorro's presidency, Chilean president Michelle

Overall, Ortega and the Sandinista Party have traded their paintbrushes and rifles and rhetoric of the margins in favor of crosses and rosary beads and two-tongued discourse. In the eyes of the people, the Sandinista Party has come to signify another deceitful turn in the wheel of Nicaraguan history and politics and is precisely the reason why I have chosen to define post-revolution within a broader framework that can be extended and adapted in order to focus on and bring recognition to a possibility of renewal and transformation.

*Post-revolution* is a ("second") process that works through and yet ultimately beyond the ("first") revolutionary process. It is a *meta*-production (aesthetic, ethical, ideological) of the individual (psychological, intra/psychic) and of societal re-structuring (e.g. economic, political, identity) in relation to its revolutionary antecedents. In other words, while "revolution produces the *New* Person" (Craven, 2002, p. 13; my emphasis), the "New Person" *meta*-produces the *post*-revolution. Consequently, post-revolution (inevitably) involves processes/methods of recovery from the violence, brutality, hate, (psychological, social) isolation, exclusion, dehumanization, and death of revolutionary war trauma. It is driven (paradoxically inspired yet beaten) by the revolutionary spirit and seeks to move past a purgatory of disaster and redemption (Adorno, 1991; Benjamin, 1968; Craven, 2002; Freire, 1970/1993; Sandoval, 2000).

*Post-Revolutionary Art*

In the same vein that the Sandinista reelection has not meant a revival of a rhetoric of the people, art created during the revolution does not simply become post-revolutionary in a new era. Rather, that art was created "in the moment" by the spirit of

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Bachelet's incumbency has translated into a further disenfranchisement of women and perpetuation of a patriarchically driven system.

revolution and for the purposes of resistance (consciousness-raising, empowerment, and solidarity). However, the revolutionary role of Nicaraguan art can be and is being appropriated to fit the current Sandinista discourse. For instance, when I traveled to Estelí during my stay in Nicaragua[15] I visited the *Galería Héroes y Mártires* [Gallery of Heroes and Martyrs].[16] Here I noticed that current campaign signs and flyers were strategically positioned next to the museum in order to idealize the past for present political agendas. Nonetheless, my focus and purpose for the present study is not to investigate the ways in which revolutionary art is being appropriated,[17] but rather to understand how new art—post-revolutionary art—is being performed for renewed political, social, and individual purposes in contemporary Nicaragua. But to reiterate my point, revolutionary art still in existence today does not equal post-revolutionary art and, like the post-revolution definition, I shall define this concept's artistic productions within a more encompassing operational matrix.

*Post-revolutionary art*, then, encompasses those performances, enactments, productions, and expressions of a post-revolutionary standpoint. It includes visual images of an evolving self, of re-structuring of society, of meta-production ("second" creation) of the world, and of efforts to create a new world from the oppression and trauma of the revolution. What makes these themes unique to post-revolutionary art as

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[15] I traveled to Nicaragua as part of a sociology course titled, "Social Dynamics of Global Change: Recovery and Challenge in Nicaragua." The course officially began on July 2nd (with a week of readings and class discussions at UNM prior to our departure) and ended the 26th, but I stayed a week longer until August 2nd with one other classmate and professor.

[16] For illustrations of some of the murals showcased at the *Galería Héroes y Mártires*, see catalogue numbers 154A-155B in *The Murals of Revolutionary Nicaragua, 1979-1992* by Kunzle (1995).

[17] For examples of studies that investigate the ways in which revolutionary/social movement art may be appropriated for current political agendas, see Coffey's (2002) study of revolutionary Mexican murals and the state's institutionalization of those artworks to create a discourse of popular citizenship and Adams's (2006) investigation of shantytown women's *arpillera* (small embroidered tapestries) protest art during and after the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile to address why political art that is for sale changes over time.

opposed to how they were articulated in earlier eras is the context in which they are now cultivated. The blurring of boundaries in a globalized age makes the expression of self, society, and production all the more complex. Yet, this is precisely the environment in which post-revolutionary art thrives.

*Surrealism*

Historically, surrealism developed out of the European experience of World War I and the consequent desire to transform the atmospheric violence and trauma of war. In the mid-1920s, Parisian poet André Breton spearheaded a mass movement that would later extend well beyond its Western borders. Merging concepts and philosophies of Dadaist libertinism with Freudian psychoanalysis, the ultimate goal of the movement was to liberate consciousness through swirling dream and reality (surreality) and making that mixture manifest via art. Surrealism claimed to be both international and subversive; its encompassing nature became quite appealing to other countries, especially those of Latin America, whose contributions helped to cultivate a global aesthetic symbiosis and the longevity of a worldwide movement (Baddeley & Fraser, 1989; Nadeau, 1965). According to Craven,

> From the beginning, the surrealists argued that what stood in the way of people being more well-rounded and more self-aware, unconsciously as well as consciously, were Western institutions, politically and economically. So even before the surrealist movement congealed in 1924…they attacked European colonialism very strongly…Surrealism was a transatlantic movement that embraced progressive tendencies involved in expanding our sense of what it means to be a human being along several different fronts…[and,] in a certain way,

> is set up as an effective anti-colonialism language by virtue of the fact that at its core is the tendency to deal with paradoxes and contradictions… (personal communication, January 17, 2008)

Notwithstanding the West's anemic distortion of the term to insinuate "a situation whereby people can just talk about being dreamers apart from humanity" (Craven, personal communication, January 17, 2008), surrealism has come to mean much more than a fanciful fantasy devoid of hard-lived experience.

In Latin America, surrealism had its inception in the 1930s in Mexico.[18] In our interview (January 17, 2008), Craven discussed how several key voices were involved in developing it, including Frida Kahlo[19] and Diego Rivera[20] with Breton and other prominent European surrealist founders who had fled to the Caribbean to escape the World War II Nazi regime.

In this light, Mexico City served as a surreal epicenter for emerging social movements, particularly the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions. In fact, this site is precisely the point at which Nicaraguan revolutionaries became introduced, immersed, and inspired by surrealism. As Craven explains,

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[18] The Mexican revolution transpired between 1910 and 1940 (Craven, 2002).

[19] Eminent Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) is remembered for her vibrant self-portraits expressing her pain—physical and psychological injury and illness as well as, and often synchronically with, cultural trauma as a result of the Mexican revolution. Kahlo's work is especially intriguing relative to an understanding of art as recovery method. When she was 18 years of age, Kahlo suffered a traumatic bus accident that left her with a fractured spinal column, collarbone, pelvis, ribs, right leg and foot; a dislocated shoulder; and a punctured uterus. Though she eventually regained her ability to walk, she would continue to experience severe relapses of pain and consequently undergo operations throughout her life. Amazingly, it is during this time that Kahlo began her career as an artist (Herrera, 1983; Zamora, 1990).

[20] Diego Rivera (1886-1957) was a renowned Mexican artist whose large frescoes helped establish the Mural Renaissance during the revolution. On a different note, but interesting nonetheless, Rivera was married to Frida Kahlo from 1929 to 1940 (Craven, 2002; Herrera, 1983; Zamora, 1990).

> Many of the great leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front were exiled under Somoza to Mexico City. Ernesto Cardenal spent time there, Sergio Ramírez spent time there…Neither the Nicaraguan revolution nor the Cuban revolution would have taken place as they did had it not been for Mexico City. (personal communication, January 17, 2008)

Ultimately, then, the "Paris" of Latin America served as a stimulus for a plethora of artistic gravitations in Nicaragua during that period.

*Surrealism* is synthesis of dichotomy and the fluid embodiment of this synthesis through art in order to ultimately emancipate psyche, body, and spirit from systematic social/societal repression. Originally, "surrealism is a revolution" (Levy, 1968, p. 9). I would also argue that it may be a post-revolution; performance and process of a person and people where alchemy of lived and dreamed realities merge together to form something much greater than the sum of its lived-dreamed parts (Adorno, 1991; Breton, 1972, 1978; Levy, 1968; Rosemont, 1978).

The dream is an intrinsic element of surrealism and plays an intricate role in understanding how transformation may transpire relative to post-revolution in general and post-revolutionary art in particular. The language of dream is a visual one, and since art is a type of visual language it shares an intimate relationship with this manifestation in several ways. First, like art, "communication is the prime purpose of the dream" (Mahoney, 1966, p. 26). Just as art functions to arouse a response from an audience, dream functions to bring to consciousness (arouse) what is unconscious; that is, "the unconscious launches a dream [in order] to *wake up* the dreamer…to some aspect of his

[or her] conscious life or personal attitudes about which s/he is sound asleep" (Mahoney, 1966, p. 26).

Second, art and dream share an intimacy in relation to uncovering, connecting, and blending terms to create a whole: unconscious with conscious, artist/dreamer with audience, figure with ground,[21] intangible with tangible, symbol with language, language with action, and action with transformation. The key idea is that the boundary between waking life and one's ocean of unconsciousness is the place where creativity lies. The capacity to bring that creativity across to consciousness is the work of an artist.

Third, dream is dramatic. In fact, according to Mahoney (1966), "the earliest Greek dramas drew their plots from the structure of dreams" (p. 69) including such elements as setting, characters, actions, conflict, climax, and denouement. The dramatic nature of dream, then, is connected to art via performance; that is, the drama of dream is made manifest through the performance of art. The relationship between drama and performance will be further discussed in the section immediately following. Fourth, both dream and art are often immersed in unconventional symbolic expression—what does it all mean? The vast and diverse interpretive landscapes of both dream and art are particularly appealing to the voyager (i.e. rhetorician). When the two are combined (i.e. performance of dream via art), as in the case of Miranda's work, it is a match made in meaning-making heaven for the rhetorical critic.

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[21] According to Rack (1991), "The artist is trained to see the negative space, the ground, and its unity with the figure, the two creating each other" (p. 97). In a similar sense, Takahashi (2007/2008) extends and adapts Mary Daly's notion of the foreground and Background in order to understand the process by which women negotiate identity and agency. She argues that this negotiation inevitably involves a journey to discover one's Self, and may be accomplished by simultaneously looking inward and outward toward one's essences of being that are created and transformed from the intra-interaction of foreground and Background.

In essence, surrealism plants the personal—the dream—into a tangible channel such as art and co-cultivates the private and public so that they may grow together and entangle the socially constructed dichotomy that is systematically imposed upon them. This cultivation is particularly important in relation to transformation; how a natural and personal psychological function such as dreaming could work in correspondence with other individuals' dreams and interpretations and to co-create a force more powerful than each individual might have ever thought possible. Given surrealism's "revolutionary" origins (as its inception was positioned between the two World Wars; I will delve more into surrealism as a movement in the middle section of Chapter 2) and its inclinations for envisioning new space and time, its ties with post-revolution and post-revolutionary art are all the more intimate and necessary.

**The Artist: Winston Miranda**

To this point, I have purposely avoided further discussion of Miranda, choosing instead to focus on historical background, context, and key concepts. However, in light of definition and contextualization of art, post-revolution, post-revolutionary art, and surrealism, it becomes clear that his life and artistic endeavors are enmeshed with these terms.

I met Miranda during my July 2007 journey with the UNM Social Dynamics study program. Miranda and I became acquainted through my friend and classmate Jacob Vigil, who was staying with Miranda in a host-family situation. The first time I stepped into his home, it was as if I had omnipresently entered into a dream world. The paintings, which were posed on the walls like windows, enabled me to see a very personal view of

Miranda's visions for opportunity and transformation. I was inspired, and at that moment, I knew I had to explore his visions more deeply.

On July 23rd, I had the honor of interviewing Miranda at his home in Granada.[22] My purpose in this introductory chapter is not to discuss all of the information generated from the interview, but rather to share a short biographical account of Miranda's artistic background.[23] I will delve further into our conversation in Chapter 3 as it relates to my method for investigating his work.

Winston Miranda was born on November 24, 1972 in San Carlos, Nicaragua, the capital of the region of Rio San Juan. He moved to Granada when he was twenty-two years old. Since his childhood, Miranda has always been fascinated and inspired by art. In fact, his earliest inspiration came from an artist uncle who kindled Miranda's interests in both sculpting and oil painting (although he mainly focuses on painting now). Ultimately, however, it is this particular time and place—his childhood in San Carlos—that has significantly influenced his artistic drive of the present (see Figure 2). He states,

> My childhood has deeply impacted my painting. I remember the water, games I played with friends, making paper boats and birds, the landscape, bubbles, airplanes, and windows; I remember looking out windows and thinking of the opportunities that awaited me. (personal communication, July 23, 2007)

Those foresighted opportunities later included an art education at the *Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes* [National School of Fine Arts] in Managua and at the Minerva School for Fine Art and Design in Groningen, the Netherlands, where he concentrated on engraving.

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[22] Jacob not only helped arrange the meeting upon my request, but he also provided significant assistance with the translation of this interview.

[23] In conjunction with the interview, Miranda provided additional information for this biography via e-mail on December 5, 2007.

Consequently, Miranda's education facilitated not only a refinement of his artistic abilities but also international recognition where he has been invited to El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain to show his work.

*Figure 2- Oil painting by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of artist, 2007.)

In addition to his travels and diverse experiences, Miranda has undergone several stylistic changes as an artist. As he expressed in our conversation, "First I began with primitivist painting (see Figure 3), I moved to realism in a second stage (see Figure 4), abstractionism in a third, a 'free-style' phase following in the fourth, a pre-Hispanic stage, and, finally, my current movement in surrealism" (personal communication, July 23, 2007). Concomitantly, it is this current stage with which I am concerned. It is rather intriguing that throughout his development Miranda's latest artwork revolves around the surrealist vision (dream). Why might he find this genre to be particularly apt at capturing certain reflections on and illuminations of experiences and current events and their interconnections therein? One of my goals for this study is to discover what kinds of implications this period has for infusing historical and contemporary rhetorical roles of art in Nicaragua in order to create a new "window of opportunity" through which to view and experience personal, political, and social transformation.

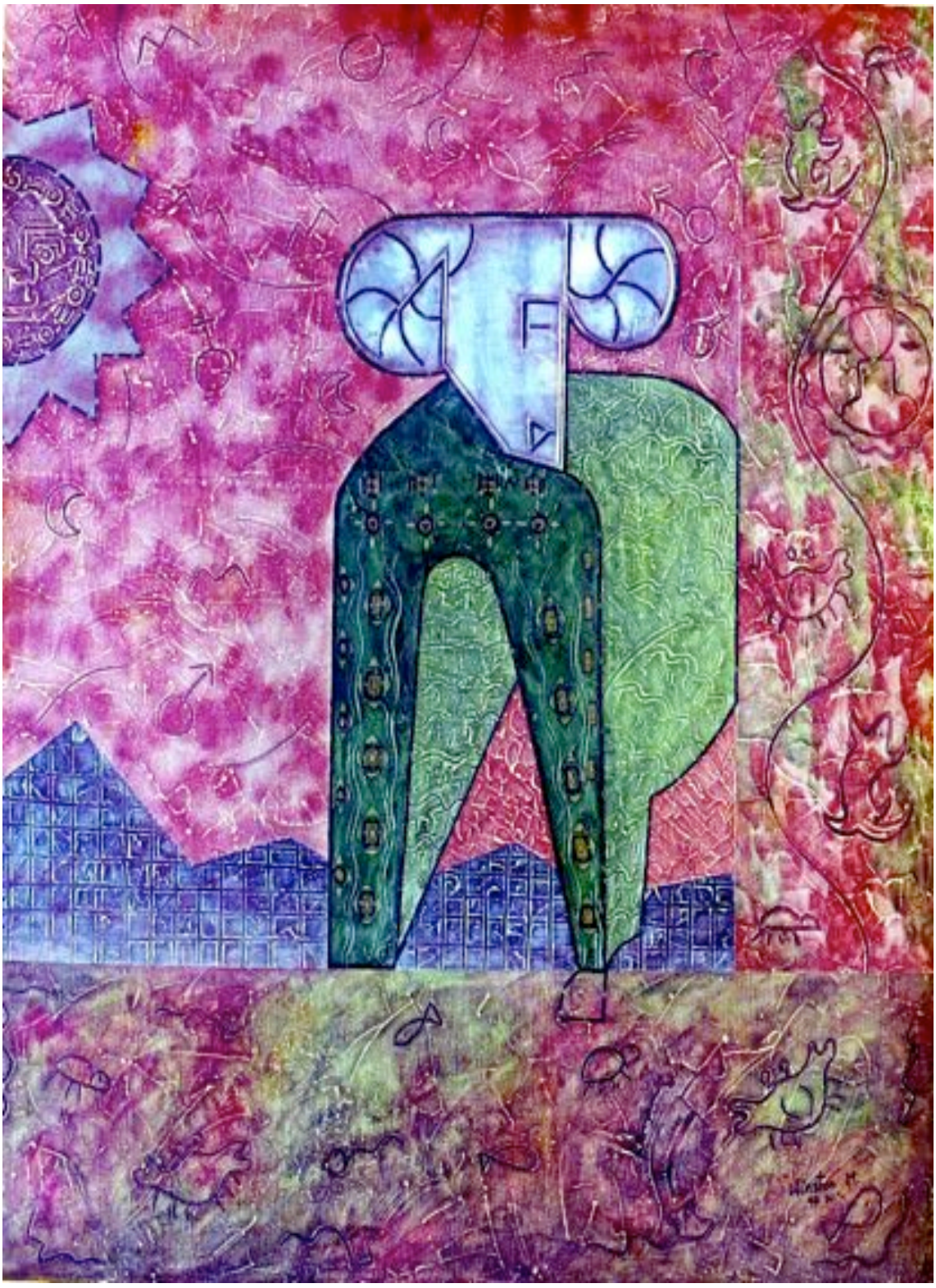

*Figure 3- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

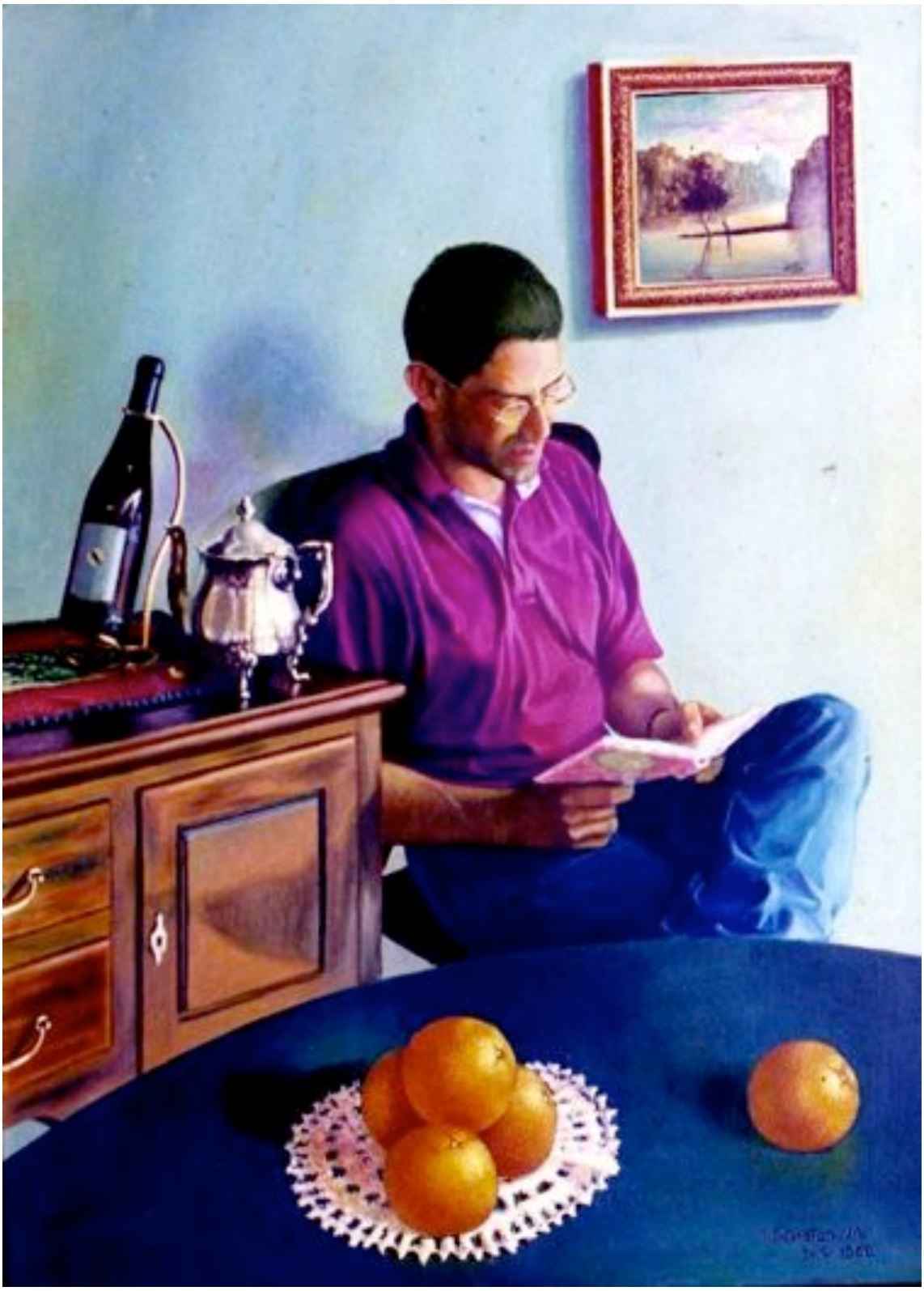

*Figure 4- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

## Research Questions and Theoretical Framework

In my study, I critically analyze the visual elements of Winston Miranda's artwork in order to understand and uncover the rhetorical messages embedded within his application of recurring themes. In so doing I ask:

(1) *What kinds of rhetorical strategies are suggested by the role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua?*

(2) *How might surrealism function to mediate these strategies in order to communicate a new kind of world?*

The artifacts or objects of study (Foss, 2004) whose contents I investigate consist of electronic and print images of original oil paintings created by Winston Miranda that were given to me by the artist himself and by the *Edificio Pellas* museum located in Managua, with permission of the artist, during the course of my stay in Nicaragua. All of the oil paintings I will analyze are typical of Miranda's current surrealist period.

My critical approach is rooted in the notions of *dramatism* as articulated by Kenneth Burke and *performance* as articulated by Richard Schechner. In particular, Burke (1969a) is interested in "what is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it" (p. xv). Dramatism, then, is a theory that considers human behavior and the language used to express this behavior; it is a tool that may be used to understand what motivates a person's "talk" in a given situation. According to Burke, the basic function of rhetoric is:

> the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents…It is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a

> symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols. (1969b, pp. 41, 43)

In other words, a major assumption of dramatism is that language is a human-constructed form of action created to evoke a response from the rhetor's audience. Language works as a terministic screen that filters our perceptions of reality and directs our attention to particular aspects of the world rather than others (Burke, 1966). A second key assumption of dramatism is that human communication is performed similarly to the way a play is enacted. We use rhetoric to present a particular viewpoint, just as a play presents a certain scenario produced by characters in the play (Foss, 2004). Dramatism, then, adopts these assumptions when analyzing those aspects of social action to which our attention is being directed through language.

Theoretically speaking, while rhetoric is the crossroads where role and art meet, the junction between art and rhetoric is performance. According to McKerrow (1989), "Criticism [critical rhetoric] is a *performance*" (p. 108). Further, the notion of "explaining showing doing" (Schechner, 2006, p. 28), or performance studies as a reflexive effort to understand the divergences and mergers between "is" performance and "as" performance is paramount to my analysis of Miranda's post-revolutionary surrealist art. In this sense, Schechner (2002) argues that, "The whole span of individual human development can be studied 'as' performance…this includes large-scale events such as social actions, revolution, and politics" (p. 23). Understanding social movement in general and revolution in particular *as* performance is the first step toward connecting the theoretical dots between "plain" subversion and art-centered social action (such as Nicaragua's "revolution of poets") and the (rhetorical) consequences therein. I argue that

the Nicaraguan revolution and other art-focused movements (e.g. the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1940, the Cuban Revolution of 1959-1989[24] and shantytown women's protest in Pinochet's Chile of 1974-1990[25]) can be considered as actions *of* performance. Art (the art-making process), as defined directly above and by many other performance theorists and practitioners (e.g. Schechner, 2006), *is* performance through historical and social events marked by "context, convention, usage, and tradition" (pp. 38, 49) and consequently reconstitutes those movements that are defined, created, and cultivated by it.

Schechner (2006) states, "performance takes place as action, interaction, and relation." In other words, "performance isn't 'in' anything, but 'between'" (p. 30). Applying this statement to my own research endeavors, performance is not "in" Miranda's paintings, but rather working, first, "between" the artist and his medium (canvas, paints, paintbrush) and, second, through creation of meaning/reality and specifically through creation of certain rhetorical strategies. The performance is the dual action of painting/meaning-creation. The viewer is/I am at first a spectator, or consumer of Miranda's performance. However, the viewer/I become/s a co-performer as we then *co*-create the initial meanings into ones of our own making. This "between" state becomes especially prevalent when Miranda's performance meets my performance of rhetorical criticism.

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[24] In addition to the investigation of Nicaraguan revolutionary art, Craven (2002) provides an excellent analysis of the art of the Mexican and Cuban revolutions in *Art and Revolution in Latin America, 1910-1990*.

[25] See Adams's (2002) ethnographic study of the prodemocracy movement in Pinochet's Chile in order to illustrate how art plays an integral role in social protests.

Since post-revolutionary art may be considered a special kind of performance, using the framework of dramatism to understand such a language is particularly advantageous to the analysis of the present study for two main reasons. First, because "the enactment of dramas by actors [rhetors] 'is' a theatrical performance" (Schechner, 2006, p. 38), the theoretical collaboration between dramatism and performance is able to provide an in-depth understanding of Miranda's enactment of post-revolution. Second, because this enactment is surrealistic, dramatism sets the stage for understanding how Miranda's art is a performance of the manifestation of the drama of his dreams and, hence, has profound implications for investigating what kinds of communicative messages those dreams are trying to "tell" us.

**Preview of Subsequent Chapters**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 addresses my study's historical background, context, key concepts, and overview. Chapter 2 establishes a literature review of art and rhetoric, social movements that have used art for rhetorical purposes, and visual rhetoric and performance. Chapter 3 describes the method of pentadic criticism and how it may be used to analyze Miranda's work. I also discuss the artifacts chosen for investigation—Miranda's paintings—and describe my interview with the artist, which provides additional information helpful to my analysis. Chapter 4 identifies the key elements of Miranda's post-revolutionary surrealist paintings as uncovered via the application of Burke's pentad. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes my findings and assesses their implications and ramifications for Nicaraguan society, world cultures, and visual rhetorical communication in general.

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

*New aspects of existence, once they are drawn into the sphere of social interest, once they make contact with the human word and human emotion, do not co-exist peacefully with other elements of existence previously drawn in, but engage them in a struggle, re-evaluate them, and bring about a change in their position within the unity of the evaluative purview.*

~Valentin Volosinov, Russian linguist (1930/1973, p. 106)

An investigation of post-revolutionary surrealist art requires an understanding of the broader role of art in relation to visual rhetoric, social movement strategy, and its transmutation in performance. In this chapter, I will review this foundation starting with Foss and Radich's (1980) rhetorical model of "aesthetic response." I will also make use of Adams's (2002) art-centered social movement framework and Schechner's (2006) notion of "blurry boundaries" of performance in order to illustrate not only art's growing presence in current social literature, but more importantly its prevalent place in questioning and complicating the lines between individual and community. The present chapter, then, will offer a brief review of scholarly studies and theoretical patterns that contribute to an understanding of rhetorical functions of art.

## A Visual Language of Action: Art is Rhetoric

In her article, "Criticism: Ephemeral and Enduring," pioneering feminist rhetorical critic Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (1974) boldly claims, "Nothing that is human symbolization is alien to me" (p. 14). Since then, Campbell's call to action has resonated particularly strongly with communication scholars; today, rhetorical critics engage in sundry studies addressing a wide range of human symbolic activities in order to understand their response-evoking dynamics. From body art (Foss, 1987) to installation pieces (Foss, 1988), historic paintings (Reid, 1990), quilts (Williams, 1994), critical

public art (Makagon, 2000), and graffiti (McCormick & Weiss, 2004), today's language includes not only talk, but also "all other human symbol systems" (Burke, 1966, p. 28) of interaction. In the words of Foss and Radich (1980), "Ours is a visual age…[thus an understanding of] the visual arts as rhetoric will contribute to an understanding of society as a whole" (p. 43). I would like to build upon the authors' assertion and focus on those communication studies that are dedicated to investigating visual, art-inspired symbol-system phenomena.

In order to understand the kinds of rhetorics of art that are being studied and how those rhetorics may impact and inform society, I will make use of Foss and Radich's (1980) framework of "aesthetic response to nonrepresentational art."[26] The authors state that their model is a "rhetorical theory of how nonrepresentational art functions to create an aesthetic experience," clarifying the nature "of symbolism in contemporary society" (p. 42). Likewise, the aesthetic response model consists of three key elements: "(1) creation of a special reality by the art object; (2) vitalization of the special reality by the audience; and (3) creation of identification between artist and viewer that enables the vitalization to occur" (p. 40).

First, art is a window through which to view a unique landscape of reality. Art is a portal, if you will, into the particular standpoint of its creator. In this light, art is not a mirror that simple reflects reality; on the contrary, the artist creates her or his reality through art and invites others to share in the view (Foss & Radich, 1980). For instance, in her analysis of Judy Chicago's art installment piece, *The Dinner Party*, Foss (1988) explains that Chicago's work constructs and articulates the empowering nature of

[26] I have purposively selected a framework particular to nonrepresentational art because I believe that it matches my study as a whole in general and my definition of art and uses and applications of/for that definition in particular. This will become quite clear as the present chapter progresses.

womanhood. By featuring empowering images tailored to represent historically famous women and their accomplishments (e.g. Emily Dickinson, Susan B. Anthony, and Sojourner Truth), *The Dinner Party* becomes a lens through which to view not only Chicago's reality, but also the way this reality is intertwined with women's agency through marginalization. In other words, women are powerful, and *The Dinner Party* facilitates the articulation and development of this standpoint.

Similarly, Reid's (1990) criticism of Hieronymus Bosch's 1485-1490 painting *The Hay-Wain* acts as a vehicle to move toward an understanding of the worldview created by Bosch. Reid (1990) argues that the overarching theme of *The Hay-Wain* centers on transition; that is, Bosch sees/constructs the world *as* transition—life transition, spiritual transition, and moral transition—through merging and blending images of binaries such as life and death, greed and openness, and redemption and damnation.

Second, audience is central to the vitalization of the constructed reality of the artwork. Art communicates its own worldview; however, this process is only made possible through audience interaction. Meaning is generated *between* artist and viewer via the art channel. However, this meaning is not monolithic; rather, it is multi-dimensional because each audience member is diverse in his or her own right (Foss & Radich, 1980). Instead, what is co-created is a swirling together of shared meanings or what Bormann (1985) calls a "rhetorical vision." To illustrate, McCormick and Weiss (2004) explain the rhetorical vision generated from a mural in the parking lot of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The authors contend that the

"fantasy themes"[27] in the mural establish a community of meanings "of a sociopolitical utopia" (McCormick & Weiss, 2004, p. 144), where cultural/state-unique symbols such as the Zia sun (originated by New Mexico's Zia Pueblo Indians as a symbol for universal harmony) and Kokopelli (a Hopi representation of fertility, harmony, and peace) combine with other symbols such as a dragon (symbolic of the World War II Manhattan Project that was conducted in Los Alamos and referred to as "tickling the dragon's tail") and an excerpt from Justice Blackmun's *Roe v. Wade* opinion to unite audience with artwork in a process that co-creates messages of celebration of cultural diversity and humanity and freedom from sexual oppression.

Likewise, Makagon (2000) addresses audience vitalization in his analysis of critical public artist Krzysztof Wodiczko and contemporary American conceptual artist Jenny Holzer's works in Manhattan during the 1980s and 90s, respectively. Makagon discusses the ways in which audience and artists co-create a reality that accentuates urban space and time by disrupting everyday social life and envisioning new methods of media use. For instance, Wodiczko's *Homeless Vehicle* asks its audience to explore the "tensions between the strange and the familiar by questioning the influence immigrants and the homeless have on conceptions of democracy and urban life" (Makagon, 2000, p. 440). Moreover, the *Homeless Vehicle* has a practical element and thus provides a very personal vitalization connection with those who use it; that is, it "provides homeless people with a mobile shelter that also has space to store bottles, cans, and the like" (p. 440) and thus engenders a special community among participant, viewer, and creator in the process.

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[27] Bormann (1972) identifies fantasy themes as those channels communicating an interpretation of events and consist of characters, actions, and settings that tell the story of a particular reality.

Last, identification must be created between artist and viewer in order for vitalization to transpire. The concept of identification explains "why some viewers succeed in vitalizing the vision offered by a work of art and thus enter an aesthetic experience and why others do not" (Foss & Radich, 1980, p. 45). Burke states that identification occurs through "consubstantiality" (1969b, pp. 20-21), or when the substance of artist significantly imbricates the substance of audience. In essence, then, identification is the synthesis of division between artist and viewer. In his study of art, virtuosity, and rhetoric, Palmer (1998) explains the process of identification in this way:

> To marvel at Michelangelo's *Pietà* or at the ballet of Mikhail Baryshnikov is to recognize them as manifestations of the power of the human agent to express. A heightened sense of agency emerges in part because all persons share a basic sense of finitude, and thus it is alluring (and, to some extent, consubstantive) to behold the actions of another individual who has markedly surpassed orthodox limits of expression…The virtuosic act is a shining feat or deed through which others can identify with a sense of increased autonomy and superb action. (p. 351)

Art is a visual language of symbolic action. Moreover, its ability to create a unique reality, share that reality with an audience to co-create a meaning community, and establish identification between artist and viewer in order to vitalize its overall vision, also makes art a rhetorical manifestation that evokes aesthetic response. This latter step is especially pertinent to the section to immediately follow. The notion of merging and blending individual substance with audience substance is a process central to any social

movement,[28] and when that movement is informed and driven by art, identification becomes all the more prominent and necessary. In essence, art is not only a language of symbolic action; it *is* action and may be embodied through enactment of strategy, such as that inspiring social protest.

**Rhetoric and Social Movement: Art Is/In Action**

The present section looks at those studies devoted to art and rhetoric within a specific context: social movement. While Foss and Radich's (1980) model of aesthetic response to nonrepresentational art facilitates a coherent theoretical bridge between art and rhetoric, I would like to shift gears and utilize a framework specifically tailored for assessing art's role in social movement.

This framework extends the notion of aesthetic response, and all steps of the former are necessary for the latter to take place. According to Adams (2002), "By examining art in movements, not only will we understand how movements use art; we will also learn more about how framing and resource mobilization are carried out; why emotion, an ethos, and name recognition are important in movements; and what movements look like 'on the ground'" (p. 22). Thus, the role of art in social movement for (1) framing; (2) resource mobilization; (3) communicating information about the movement and members of the movement; and (4) building solidarity through symbolic

[28] In their social protest theory of a "rhetoric of agitation," Bowers and Ochs (1971) demonstrate the characteristics of identification through "defining the situation." They argue that successful social movement advocates must construct a cause, that is, they must formulate an ideology that provides their audience with a key rhetorical plan-of-action, which consists of three key steps: (1) articulation of the historical understanding of how the present situation came about; (2) clarification of what is presently happening, depiction of the problem/s facing the group, development of the causes of that/those problem/s, and distinguishing of "enemy/ies;" and (3) elucidation of key strategies for change and envisioning of a positive future for the group. To illustrate, Takahashi (2008) utilizes this framework in order to investigate the ways in which the "comfort women" establish identification with a global audience via a rhetoric of survivorship.

means inevitably entails its reality creation, audience vitalization, and identification antecedents.

First, framing is a key aspect of how social movements use art for rhetorical purposes (Adams, 2002). Just as art is a window through which reality may be viewed, it also works to frame that reality, to guide our senses to a particular worldview. Burke (1966) identifies the "terministic" nature of language, and since art is a visual language it, too, may be characterized as such. In general, framing involves "the conscious strategic effort by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996, p. 6).

Gallagher and Zagacki (2005) illustrate how art functions as a framing tool through their study of Norman Rockwell's paintings of the U.S. civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Rockwell (1894-1978), an American icon known for his realist expressions of popular values and patriotic images, is an especially intriguing figure to study relative to this movement context. In the 1960s, Rockwell made a dramatic shift in the kinds of imagery he chose to create. Rather than painting images thematic of patriotic nostalgia, he chose to document through his art "the racial discord in American society as it emerged over civil rights and desegregation" (Gallagher & Zagacki, 2005, p. 176). He forfeited his position with the *Saturday Evening Post*, where he designed many of the magazine's cover pages, because he was not permitted to paint Black Americans "unless they were performing menial tasks" (Marling, 1997, p. 137). Rockwell transferred to *Look* magazine where he produced three key paintings portraying desegregation and civil rights: "The Problem We All Live With," "Murder in Mississippi," and "New Kids in the

Neighborhood." Gallagher and Zagacki (2005) analyze these paintings and discuss their framing ability to disregard established dehumanizing caricatures, create recognition through particularity, depict material aspects of American society, and, ultimately, communicate a common humanity.

Second, social movements may use art rhetorically for resource mobilization (Adams, 2002). The function of art in social movements as a method to mobilize resources is unique because "it so strongly shifts the perspective" from art as individual creation to art as collective action (Baumann, 2007, p. 55). In the same light that audience is essential to the vitalization process of the reality of an artwork, art and audience work together to vitalize the social movement through resource mobilization. For instance, Adams identifies the ways in which Chilean shantytown women used *arpilleras* in the 1970s and 1980s to mobilize resources within the stifling Pinochet regime climate. To mobilize money, a more tangible resource, outside members (often Chilean exiles), "sold the arpilleras at church meetings, craft markets, or political events in Europe and America [and] would send the money back to the *Vicaría*," the human rights organization for whom the shantytown women worked. The *Vicaría* in turn used the money to pay the women and run its programs" (2002, p. 39).

Moreover, intangible resources such as hope and determination were also mobilized through art. Many of the individuals who bought the *arpilleras* did so because they were moved by what the art represented. Consequently, the shantytown women interpreted the buyers' emotions as an indication that they cared about and supported the movement and their work, giving them the impetus to "keep moving." Perhaps most importantly, though, the *arpilleras* helped cultivate an international network that

facilitated pressure upon the authoritarian state. In this sense, those European and North American human rights groups who bought the *arpilleras* often did so for campaign purposes to attract more members—a resource in and of itself—and to develop a multi-sited support community for the movement (Adams, 2002).

Third, social movements may use art rhetorically in order to communicate information about the movement and its members (Adams, 2002). What does the movement stand for? Who are the key leaders? Who are the antagonists? What are the goals of the movement? What is the historical backdrop of the movement? These are the kinds of questions that art may be used to answer when considering movement-generated emotions, ethos, and name recognition.

For example, Craven (2002) discusses how the Cuban revolution (1959-1989) had a strong foundation in experimentalism and synthesis; its members believed that "Cuban culture is 'mulatto' in many of its forms, it is a product of dynamic hybridization, under specific historical and social conditions, of seeds from the West and the non-West" (Mosquera, 1985, p.1). Advocates of the revolution not only made efforts to perform this notion of *mestizaje* in their own artworks, but also encouraged/taught others to do the same in theirs. Moreover, by utilizing art as a means by which to communicate the "mixed-blooded," unorthodox, nature of the revolution, it also served the double purpose of eroding the imposed dominant discourse (Craven, 2002). Overall, then, Gerardo Mosquera describes the function of art in the Cuban revolution for purposes of information transaction as such:

> Instead of feeling like second-rate Europeans, or "Indians" and "Blacks" who do not belong in the West, or like victims of chaos, we [Cuban revolutionaries] are

> building on the multilateral nature of our culture, thus constructing our own synthesis that allows us to incorporate naturally the most diverse elements…We seek identity as a form of action, not as a type of exhibition. In the "search for national identity," some have advocated an "expression of our roots" that has caused a grave cultural misfocus…This is a serious mistake, since the problem is not to find an identity, but to *construct* one. This is what *it means to be ourselves*. (as cited in Craven, 2002, p. 114; my emphasis for the former)

Fourth, building solidarity through symbols is a key function of art in social movement (Adams, 2002). At the heart of symbolically building solidarity, is identification where perspective of artist and perspective of viewer merge together to collaborate on construction of reality. Concomitantly, the movement becomes a community of sorts that creates aesthetic drama "wherein persons become aware of the nature and quality of their lives as participants of a socio-cultural [unity]" (Palmer, 1998, p. 353). Altogether, art may be used to manifest solidarity through expression of a coherent identity, membership clarification, and establishment of commitment (Adams, 2002).

Some social movements are able to facilitate a symbolic collective awareness more effectively than others. From its post-World War I inception, "aesthetic drama" was a hallmark of the dream-nucleus of the versatile nature of the surrealist movement. Baddeley and Fraser (1989) express that Surrealist proponents utilized the inherent symbolic processes of dream in order to negotiate a collective identity in diversity, to diffuse boundaries between a whole mélange of dichotomies including that of individual and collective, and ultimately to create strategies of (psychological, physical, spiritual)

liberation through artistic embodiment. As surrealist movement founder André Breton (1978) expressed during his travels in Haiti in December 1945:

> Surrealism is allied with peoples of color, first because it has sided with them against all forms of imperialism and white brigandage…and secondly because of the profound affinities between surrealism and "primitive" thought. Both envision the abolition of the hegemony of the conscious and the everyday, leading to the conquest of *revelatory emotion*. (p. 256)

In essence, the surrealist movement became somewhat of a meta-movement in that it spread from/worked through its European origins to influence, incorporate, express, symbolize, and inspire other international movements, such as the revolutions of Mexico, Cuba, and Nicaragua, to create a "well-rounded" symbolic solidarity. What was appealing about the surrealist movement, however, was not the imposition or desire to "copy" its techniques, or forms, or practices, but rather a *making of* the movement through a variety of experiences, identities, styles, and backgrounds and their symbolic manifestations therein (Baddeley & Fraser, 1989; Craven, 2002). In other words, "the fate of surrealism depended on the growing historical ascendancy of Third World artists within the movement" (Craven, 2002, p. 108) and thus accounted for its worldwide "consubstantiality" (Burke, 1969b).

Social movements offer an ideal context in which to illustrate the rhetorical nature of art. Movements may use art rhetorically to frame a shared understanding of the world, mobilize resources, communicate information about the movement and its advocates, and symbolize and manifest solidarity. However, in understanding these functions, one must wonder if a movement can *become* art in the process of intimately using it. It is clear that

art becomes movement as demonstrated by the studies above; however I would also argue that the inverse is true. Baumann (2006) asks us to consider "how art worlds are *like* social movements," but can social movement *be* art? For instance, consider my definition of art (as proposed in Chapter 1). If I were to substitute the term "art" for "social movement," it would read something like this:

> *Social movement* is performance, enactment, production, and expression of a particular viewpoint or particular viewpoints and evokes (inspires) re/action in thought and/or deed. *Social movement* is a function of "the moment;" a way to paradoxically preserve yet transform time and space of human condition. *Social movement* is not a (passive) product solely of/for consumption. On the contrary, it is a reflexive and re/generative product where the response of the viewer (*advocate*/audience) is essential for a *movement* to live on, albeit in a "trans-" form. Moreover, *movement* may be an agency of the oppressed and a means by which to create liberatory space-time.[29]

Evidently, the line drawn to delineate where social movement ends and art begins is an obfuscation. This is especially illuminated in Adorno's (1991) definition of art as a liberatory practice. He asserts that art is one of the few domains in which people are able to achieve "something like freedom in the midst of unfreedom…[because] the art that moves ahead into the unknown, the only art now possible, is neither lighthearted nor serious; the third possibility, however, is cloaked in obscurity, as though embedded in a void the figures of which are traced by advanced works of art" (pp. 248, 253). Particularly relevant to Adorno's views of surrealism, it is a movement of "third possibility" where "markers" of obscurity, transcendence, and retrospection are all the

[29] Italicized words indicate substitution.

more highlighted—a quintessential "source of possibility for overcoming the alienation of subject and object" (Ganguly, 2004, p. 255).[30] I now turn to the relationship between visual rhetoric/art and performance.

**Blurring Boundaries: Visual Rhetoric Is Performance**

Thus far I have argued that art is rhetoric and social movement and social movement is art.[31] At this point I would like to bring in the notion of performance. Specifically, I would like to focus on what role art plays in performance relative to Schechner's (2006) notions of (1) restored, or twice-behaved behavior; (2) "is"/"as" performance; and (3) make-believe/make belief performance in particular and rhetoric and social movement in general.

First, behavior is the stuff performance is made of—times two. According to Schechner (2006),

> Performances mark identities, bend time, reshape and adorn the body, and tell stories. Performances—of art, rituals, or ordinary life—are "restored behaviors," "twice-behaved behaviors," performed actions that people train for and rehearse. (p. 28)

From everyday practices such as brushing one's teeth to more "obvious" performances such as musicians playing a sonata and even less obvious ones like taking one's "first"

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[30] In her article, Ganguly (2004) investigates the similarities and differences between Adorno's and Walter Benjamin's "arguments about surrealism's radical attempts to transform the everyday" (p. 255). While the two Frankfurt School intellectuals depart in their interpretations (the former finding aesthetic and mobilizing potential in the movement and the latter inadequate social critique and "profane illuminations"), I believe that they both have profound applicatory implications for explaining the rhetorical and performative workings of Miranda's paintings. In Chapter 4, I will return to Benjamin and extend and adapt his theories of translation and aura as they help to facilitate understanding of my findings.

[31] While my thesis focuses on dimensions, imbrications, and surrogations of art, rhetoric, and social movement, a deluge of studies specifically has addressed the nature of "social movement is rhetoric." See, for instance, "Protest Rhetoric and Social Movements" in Golden, Berquist, Coleman, and Sproule (2004, pp. 411-428).

step, performances entail "actions that are not-for-the-first time" (p. 29). Brushing one's teeth may be considered a restored-behavior because it is a daily ritual just as performing a sonata is a product of years of practice and a baby's first step is a culmination of crawling, countless efforts at standing up, and falling (which are steps in and of themselves). To contextualize this idea relative to the present study, take for instance the role of art in the Nicaraguan revolution. *Campesinos* who had learned how to paint in and because of the revolution, for example, put into action previously rehearsed behaviors such as skills for farming where those abilities may have helped to lay the groundwork for other artistic coordination. Likewise, renowned artworks, such as ones created by Armando Morales,[32] had been cultivations of a lifetime of practice and critical development for challenging the establishment in effect ways.

Second, some events are more directly associated with performance and others less directly so. "Any behavior, event, action, or thing can be studied 'as' performance" (Schechner, 2006, p. 40). Schechner (2006) uses the example of "maps 'as' performance" (pp. 40-42) to illustrate the wide applicability of studying "as" social phenomena: maps are not neutral; "they perform a particular interpretation of the world. Every map is a 'projection,' a specific way of representing a sphere on a flat surface" (p. 41). In terms of Nicaragua, the Somoza dictatorship may be another example for contextualizing "as" performances, for it certainly was not neutral in enacting a specific interpretation of revolutionary voices at hand, and consequently performed rhetorics of control, brutality, and dehumanization to sustain its privileged positions of power.

[32] According to Craven (2002), Armando Morales is the most celebrated Nicaragua painter. Some of his most famous accomplishments include serving as the ambassador for the revolutionary state from 1982 to 1990 and winning several international art awards such as that for "Latin American artist at the fifth Sao Paulo Biennial in 1959" (p. 131).

"Is" performance, on the other hand, may be considered a more established practice of societies. "Something 'is' performance when historical and social context, convention, usage, and tradition say it is" (Schechner, 2006, p. 38). Even then, the door is still wide open; rituals, play and games, and the roles of everyday life are performances as established by the requirements above. Hence, what "makes" a performance a performance and what makes it "like" a performance does not depend on any given event but rather on "*how that event is received and placed*" (context, convention, usage, tradition; p. 38; my emphasis) by an audience (even if the audience is the performer her or himself, a performer's first audience). For instance, since the Nicaraguan revolution was most certainly a matrix for a whole cluster of artistic developments, it was thus "received and placed" by Nicaraguans in a very special way: "*El Triunfo de la Revolución es el Triunfo de la Poesía*" [The Triumph of the Revolution is the Triumph of Poetry] (Street Graffiti, León, Nicaragua, July, 1979 as cited in Craven, 1988, p. 51 and 2002, p. 117). Extending and adapting is/as performance to art, Kaprow (1983) explains the divergences of "artlike art" and "lifelike art":

> Artlike art holds that art is separate from life and everything else…mind is separate from body, individual is separate from people, civilization is separate from nature, and each art is separate from the other. [In contrast,] lifelike art holds that art is connected to life and everything else…art [is] at the service of life…Lifelike art makers' principal dialogue is not with art but with everything else, one event suggesting another…It's never certain if an artist who creates…lifelike art is an artist. (pp. 37, 38)

Art by this study's definition (context, convention, usage, tradition) *is* performance. Moreover, as I have demonstrated above within the given contexts, art is social movement and vice versa. Therefore, if art = performance and movement = art, then social movement = performance (art = performance = movement), because it is "received and placed" as such (e.g. art was an integral rhetorical element of the Nicaraguan revolution; without art there would have been no revolution) even though it may be thought of otherwise (i.e. as "as" performance). In other words, the lines between "as" and "is" performance are not so clear. Just as "the possible boundaries between lifelike art and the rest of life [are] kept intentionally blurred" (Kaprow, 1983, p. 39), so, too, are those of performance.

Third, performances may be characterized as "make-believe" or "make-belief." *Make-believe* performances clearly differentiate the world of performance from that of everyday life, while *make-belief* performances intentionally obfuscate those delineations. For instance, the social roles that we enact on a daily basis, "such as professional roles, gender and race roles, and shaping one's identity, are *not* make-believe actions" (a child playing "teacher," on the other hand, is). Rather, they *make belief* by creating "the very social realities they enact" (Schechner, 2006, p. 42; my emphasis). Thus, art and social movement make belief because artists/advocates create/perform those responses they want their audiences to consider "real," and, in turn, co-perform/create.[33] In the Nicaraguan revolution, artists wanted to transform the oppressive environment of the dictatorship into a cultural matrix of people-centered creativity and liberation. Thus, they

[33] However, art philosopher Kendall Walton (1990) argues that representational art is make-believe, that it is based on the assumption that art and life are detached from each other and hierarchically "real": life is first, art is second. I choose to base my connections of art, rhetoric, movement, and performance relative to nonrepresentation in order to show the fluidity that exists between/among/within them.

performed—made manifest—this reality through their art and through collectivity and, consequently, blurred the boundaries distinguishing social movement from art, public from private, everyday from unusual, and self from solidarity.

## Chapter Summary

Art is a rhetorical manifestation that facilitates the communication of a unique reality, is vitalized through audience interaction, and establishes identification between artist and viewer in order to evoke an overall vision. Moreover, art may be used rhetorically in social movements to frame a particular worldview, mobilize tangible and intangible resources, convey information about the movement and its advocates, and build solidarity among members through symbolic meaning creation. Last, rhetoric, art, and social movement are all fluidly intertwined in their shared currents of performance. Performances are composed of twice-behaved, or restored behaviors where actions of the present are never done-for-the-first time, but instead are products of rehearsal, repetition, and practice even when those actions seem "new" to the performer. Likewise, "is" and "as" performances are protean, forever changing according to the time and space that they occupy and how they are received in that time and space. Last, performances are either make-believe, where boundaries are clearly drawn between performance and life, or make-belief, such that they intentionally sabotage any shores separating role and reality.

What happens now? What happens after the movement dies down? What kinds of new strategies are created in a post-movement epoch to rebound from the dichotomous (rigid) nature of war? How do those behaviors of revolution fluctuate in a new time and

space? How do a people make belief anew? In essence, the transformational floodgates are wide open. According to Schechner (2006),

> Accepting the performative as a category of theory makes it increasingly difficult to sustain a distinction between appearances and reality, facts and make-believe, surfaces and depths. Appearances are actualities—neither more nor less so than what lies behind or beneath appearances. Social reality is constructed through and through. In modernity, what was "deep" and "hidden" was thought to be "more real" than what was on the surface…But in postmodernity, the relationship between depths and surfaces is fluid; the relationship is dynamically convective. (pp. 22-23)

I will use the idea of performative in combination with the notion of dramatism as a framework to analyze post-revolutionary surrealist art. The waters may be choppy, but there are dreams to be had. And life is but…

# CHAPTER 3: METHOD

*I am concerned, primarily, with the performance of subversive and subaltern narratives, the challenge of traveling between domains of power, and…performance of possibilities that seeks out that more complicated space between the cynic and the zealot.*
~D. Soyini Madison, American writer and director (2003, p. 471)

The remainder of this thesis is devoted to an analysis of the visual elements of Winston Miranda's post-revolutionary surrealist paintings. In the present chapter, I begin by restating my research questions and discussing my methodological framework, which also includes describing my artifacts of analysis (Miranda's paintings). I then discuss my interview with Miranda as it pertains to the analysis of his work.

## Research Questions

My research questions are:

(1) What kinds of rhetorical strategies are suggested by the role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua?

(2) How might surrealism function to mediate these strategies in order to communicate a new kind of world?

## Pentadic Criticism: Method of Analysis

### *Foundation*

Since Miranda's work specifically addresses the nature of post-revolutionary surrealist art, my analysis of his paintings will provide new understanding and insight into what kinds of rhetorics may arise from such performances. By framing Miranda's art dramatically and performatively, I am able to identify what kinds of strategies are suggested through his art and the functions those might play in the creation of a post-revolutionary vision for Nicaragua.

*Data*

My primary data consist of electronic and print images of original oil paintings created by Winston Miranda that were presented to me by Miranda himself and by the *Edificio Pellas* museum located in Managua with permission of the artist, during the course of my stay in Nicaragua from July 9 to August 2, 2007. Miranda presented me with 23 images of his paintings. Of those 23, 19 images were located on a compact disc, two within separate issues of the magazine *Cultura de Paz* (*Justicia: Azar y Precipicio* was featured in the July-September 2002 issue and *Ofrenda* in April-July 2007),[34] one within the national newspaper *La Prensa* (*Los Amantes* was featured in the January 3, 2003 paper), and one was photographed by Jacob in Miranda's home. However, of the 19 on the CD, I will not focus on eight of the images because two are paintings from his primitivist stage, four from his realist stage, and two are hybrid primitivist/realist works (I am solely concerned with his current surrealist period). Additionally, 13 images were presented to me by the Managua art museum, *Edificio Pellas* via collection by USB flash drive. In total, I will analyze 28 of Miranda's surrealist paintings, which were completed during the current post-revolutionary period in Nicaragua.

I see each of Miranda's paintings as individual acts of the whole of the performance. All together, then, there are 28 acts. Within each of these acts, I will look for visual images that embody the elements of the dramatistic pentad: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose.

The tool I shall use for investigating the rhetoric of Winston Miranda is pentadic criticism. Pentadic criticism stems from Burke's (1969a) theory of the dramatistic

[34] Miranda gave me a copy of both of the magazine issues. Also important to note is that Ernesto Cardenal is a key writer for *Cultura de Paz*.

pentad, which seeks to understand "how and why human beings use rhetoric and to what effect" (Foss, 2004, p. 383). The pentad involves five key components, or elements of social life: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. In turn, identifying which of the five positions is given preference in a message reveals why a rhetor selected a given rhetorical strategy—for realist, materialist, idealist, pragmatist, or mysticist motives.

On a parallel plane, when a critic seeks to use the pentad to analyze a given artifact, she or he engages in a two-pronged process. The first step is identifying and labeling those five key components of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose as they are presented in that artifact. For example, when I perform my analysis of Miranda's paintings, I will first identify and name those visual images of acts, scenes, agents, agencies, and purposes in the paintings.

***Act~*** Act is a term that "names what took place in thought or deed" (Burke, 1969a, p. xv), or what was done by someone within a rhetor's presentation. If act is the featured element in the message, Burke (1969a) suggests that the corresponding philosophy is realism, "the doctrine that universal principles are more real than objects as they are physically sensed" (Foss, 2004, p. 389).

***Scene~*** Scene names the context for/surrounding the act, or the background or situation in which the act occurred (Burke, 1969a). If scene is given precedence, the accompanying philosophical standpoint is materialism, or the viewpoint that considers all facts and reality to be explainable based on matter and motion or physical laws (Foss, 2004).

***Agent~*** Agent indicates "what person or kind of person performed the act" (Burke, 1969a, p. xv). When agent is given priority, then the worldview of idealism is

revealed and entails understanding mind and spirit to be essences of human experience and "essences of essences" of the universe (Foss, 2004).

***Agency~*** Agency is the means or instruments the agent used to perform the deed (act) (Burke, 1969a). If agency is featured, the pragmatic view is the corresponding philosophical system. Pragmatism denotes concern with consequences, function, and the means necessary for attainment of a goal (Foss, 2004).

***Purpose~*** Purpose is the reason an agent acts that is revealed through the rhetor's message. Purpose, then, is not synonymous with motive, or the overarching explanation for the symbolic action ("talk") of the rhetor. If purpose is highlighted, the philosophy of mysticism is communicated; the belief that individual and universe are united for a cosmic design (Foss, 2004).

The second step involves setting up those five terms according to ratios in order to identify which is most dominant. It is paramount to discover which term is dominant because it "provides insight into what dimension of the situation the rhetor privileges or sees as most important" (Foss, 2004, p. 387).

The five positions are then systematically paired to determine "the relationship between them and the nature of the influence each has on the other" (Foss, 2004, p. 387). In total, twenty ratios may be culled from the process:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scene-Act | Act-Scene | Agent-Scene | Agency-Scene | Purpose-Scene |
| Scene-Agent | Act-Agent | Agent-Act | Agency-Act | Purpose-Act |
| Scene-Agency | Act-Agency | Agent-Agency | Agency-Agent | Purpose-Agent |
| Scene-Purpose | Act-Purpose | Agent-Purpose | Agency-Purpose | Purpose-Agency |

There is no one right ratio with which to start analysis. However, whichever ratio is selected, the first term is the one whose prevalence is to be determined. For example, in the ratio *purpose-agent*, one might ask, "Does a *purpose* somehow require that an *agent* be a certain way?" or "Is there something in a *purpose* that determines the nature of an *agent*?" (Foss, 2004)

The pairing process is not included in the actual essay of criticism to be produced. The critic does this work behind the scenes before writing up the essay. Instead, what is to be featured is the dominant term and why the critic has selected it as it applies to how it influences or requires the other terms to have certain characteristics (Foss, 2004).

For my findings and analysis and discussion chapters, I will have three layers of pentads where each falls on a manifest-to-latent continuum across the aggregate of Miranda data. Layer I constitutes an identification and description of the literal visual elements of the painting collective. Layer II addresses Miranda's central standpoint within the dream-painting drama. Finally, Layer III considers the role of viewer as a necessary element in the overall performance. Layers I and II will be investigated in Chapter 4 and Layer III in Chapter 5.

**Miranda Interview**

I will also rely on my personal interview with Miranda to supplement and inform the pairings discovered in the analysis of the paintings themselves. During our discussion, he shared with me that he is profoundly impacted by the images that are revealed to him through his unconscious; that is, his dreams. Not only are his paintings characteristic of dream (i.e. surrealist), then, they *are* dream. Above all, according to Miranda, his paintings are of hope: "All my paintings are of hope. Everyone has his or

her own interpretation [about what hope is]; the artist's [my] viewpoint isn't the only valid one" (personal communication, July 23, 2007). Moreover, as he expressed in the interview, he has different hopes in relation to Nicaragua's future, for politics, youth, culture, and social roles. "I paint the beauty of my country," he says, "I am inspired by my country. I believe that artists paint the moment in which they live. For example, in the 1980s [Nicaraguan] artists painted much on war [the revolution and Contra war]. By painting "in the moment," we immortalize that time; we share it with people of the present and future" (personal communication, July 23, 2007). Interestingly, in an e-mail message sent to me on December 5, 2007, Miranda stated that he himself fought for the Sandinistas in the Contra war and later utilized his artistic skills as a way to expose and encapsulate these experiences. In this sense, he subversively created artwork, such as *Llamado Incensia*, in order to express the crippling and malefic nature of win-or-lose battle and bloodshed. In *Llamado Incensia*, he focused on landmines and their debilitating consequences.

However, Miranda's current work is not limited to this type of thematic imagery nor does it center on war. He believes that this "moment" in which we live cannot be recreated or renewed by those still consumed by a war-torn past. Rather, political and cultural healing will come with a new generation:

> It has been sixteen years since the war has ended and politicians still can't get together to help Nicaraguans. We need political change in policy and individuals. However, I believe that change will happen only when the passions of the people of the 80s are no longer here. Many people still feel the pain—the wounds need to heal. It is only when those people are gone and a new generation comes will

> [real] change take place…I see it happening now. Young people [today] think differently [than their revolutionary and Contra-counter parts], so I believe that this is the next generation. (personal communication, July 23, 2007)

In addition to the kinds of political and cultural transformations that Miranda sees happening for the future, he hopes that gender roles will also change, and this was another theme that emerged in my interview with him:

> In Latin American countries gender issues are strong. *Machismo* and *feminismo* exist, but *machismo* is much more visible. Historically, people have learned to deal with it [consent to *machismo* control], but we need to change…Nicaragua definitely needs change, and I believe that this change must come through education. There are different levels of rationality [for domestic violence and sexual abuse] and most of it is poor in the world. These [domestic violence and sexual abuse] are the most destructive facets in life. (personal communication, July 23, 2007)

Changes in youth, culture, political, and social roles are just a few of the themes running not only throughout my conversation with Miranda, but also throughout his current stage as a surrealist artist. I will explore these themes and more in the chapter to follow.

# CHAPER 4: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

*The eye exists in its savage state. The Marvels of the earth a hundred feet high, the Marvels of the sea a hundred feet deep, have as their sole witness the wild eye that traces all its colors back to the rainbow. It presides over the conventional exchange of signals that the navigation of the wind would seem to demand.*

~André Breton, French surrealist movement founder and poet (1928/2002, p. 1)

*The text, in its mass, is comparable to a sky, at once flat and smooth, deep, without edges and without landmarks; like the soothsayer drawing on it with the tip of his staff an imaginary rectangle wherein to consult, according to certain principles, the flight of birds, the commentator traces through the text certain zones of reading, in order to observe therein the migration of meanings, the outcropping of codes, the passage of citations.*

~Roland Barthes, French semiotician and literary critic (1974, p. 14)

For the current chapter, I will identify and analyze the literal and latent elements of Winston Miranda's oil paintings in terms of Burke's pentad—act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. In particular, I will organize those elements according to two major pentadic paradigms, which will be referred to in a sense of graduated literal-to-latent layers to capture their overlapping and re-creative qualities: Layer I = Dream and Layer II = Play. Layer I addresses those dream manifestations across the collective of Miranda paintings. Layer II investigates Miranda's role in interacting with those literal visual depictions and their latencies. A third pentadic paradigm—Layer III = Lived World—will be featured in Chapter 5 and considers an audience perspective in viewing Miranda's surrealist images.

## Layer I: Dream

Layer I may be thought of as "surrealism in manifest." In Chapter 1, I explained how both art and dream are visual languages that play crucial parts in facilitating a transactional articulation of surrealism (its ideological concerns, practices, and the like). In this section I will be looking for visual "utterances" featured in Miranda's 28 surrealist

works that explicitly embody those acts, scenes, agents, agencies, and purposes characteristic of the dramatistic pentad. While my analysis will describe a variety of images of individual paintings, the sub-categorical themes within each main pentadic grouping reflect the aggregate elements across the body of Miranda painting data. I will list the pentadic elements below as they appear in Miranda's paintings and then discuss each one according to how they are ordered in the list.

*Surrealism in Manifest: Synopsis*

***Act~*** to suspend and float

to balance

***Scene~*** layered environments: sky-water, sky-land, and sky-cloud-time layers

hyperopic perspectives

***Agent~*** inanimate agents: *granadillas* and paper objects

animate agents: babies and butterflies

in/animate hybrid agents: violinists, pope, lovers, guardian, *maquila* worker, *caudillo*, and Winston Miranda

***Agency~*** tools of transition: point-to-point agencies- ladders, stairs, keys, violins, precipice, rods/poles, and strings

open-ended agencies- windows, *granadilla* shapes, colors, white materials, spinning tops and balls, and water

containers: boats, baskets and pots, frames, and *granadillas*, people, and skies

***Purpose~*** to show/to be shown

*Acts*

Act is one of the most discerning elements of Miranda's paintings around dream. In Miranda's artworks, figures (agents and agencies) not only float on water, but also are suspended in the air and defy gravity to overtly articulate an oneiric atmosphere. Likewise, suspension and flotation thematically coincide with an act of balancing. Thus, for this section I will organize the acts that appear in the paintings according to two categories: *to suspend/float* and *to balance*.[35]

***To Suspend and To Float*~** Suspension (the act of hanging, supporting, or dragging something/one in air) and flotation (the act of moving, hovering, or drifting in water or air) are undoubtedly the most prominent acts of the agents of Miranda's surrealist images, appearing in every single one of the 28 paintings analyzed here. I include both of these acts together because they simultaneously transpire in 25[36] of the 28 works of art—where one figure or piece of figure is suspended another is floating—whether in the air, water, or both. Figures 5-8 are sufficient examples of this theme of suspension and flotation.

In Figure 5, sections of a *granadilla*[37]—a type of passion fruit specific to tropical climates of Central and South America—float (the bottom three-fourths like a balloon and two smaller chunks on a left diagonal) and are suspended (the top right quarter as if being lowered to add on to an unfinished skyscraper) in the air as a paper bird (perhaps a

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[35] While "to suspend/float" and "to balance" axiomatically entail those discursive symbols expressing what acts are being done in Miranda's paintings, I often will refer to them in their noun forms as they now become the subjects of the present thesis.

[36] There are three paintings that do not feature figures simultaneously floating and suspending: Figures 2, 13, and 25. These three works illustrate characters and objects only floating.

[37] The *granadilla* is a central element of Miranda's paintings. While I will only make reference to this figure as it relates to the acts of suspension and flotation and balance, I will return to a more descriptive analysis of the *granadilla* in the "Agents" and "Agencies" sections to follow.

seagull) flies directly underneath the bottom's belly.[38] In a similar light, Figure 6 features a *granadilla*-headed violinist levitating center-stage while supporting his string-instrument on his left shoulder.

Likewise, Figure 7 pictures a large wicker basket containing and supporting two massive *granadillas* and a bright yellow cloth napkin hovers in the sky, foregrounding the red toy boat and blue bouncing ball that drift on placid waters below. Last, a small paper boat afloat a deep blue pool and two halves of a *granadilla* dangling in the forefront of an overcast sky constitute the manifest acts of Figure 8.

Suspension and flotation are two major endeavors for figures in the Miranda painting collective. Unlikely objects and people hang or levitate in the air and/or on water. I would like to highlight another key act—balancing—that may bridge these two in the section to follow.

***To Balance~*** Just as pervasive as suspension and flotation is the act of balancing: to arrange, adjust, or proportion parts to create equilibrium.[39] While establishment of complement between *figure and ground* is an essential task of all artists (e.g. Rack, 1991), Miranda's paintings overtly accentuate this notion. Moreover, the balances of the agents are not mutual exclusions of the former acts. On the contrary, balancing is intimately, even inseparably, intertwined with suspension and flotation. What is encoded

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[38] Implicit in my argument in the "Acts" section is the notion that inanimate objects, e.g. paper, are agents and thus may act as such, whether transitively or intransitively. This underlying assertion will be highlighted first in the "Agents" section and further clarified and elaborated upon in Layer II: Play.

[39] I am referring to balancing here as it relates to the acts of agents. However, I will also be arguing that other elements, i.e. scenes and agencies, communicate balanced qualities and thus ultimately facilitate these acts in the process. For example, sky and water may complement each other as well as colors such as black and white and blue and orange. Further still, the distinction between what constitutes "true" scenes and agencies as opposed to anthropomorphized (inanimate) figures to convey this quality/act walks a fine line and will become even more apparent and, consequently, utilized for theoretical purposes as my thesis continues to unfold.

in Miranda's paintings is a relationship *of* balance of suspension and flotation. Put differently, the suspension and flotation of individual figures/parts of figures are balanced by each other in addition to figures balancing themselves.

For instance, in Figure 5 the *granadilla's* top quarter is being suspended above its bottom three-quarters in lieu of constructing a whole (proportioned) fruit. Figure 6 conveys a similar arrangement in that the violinist is floating freely in the air while also manipulating his musical apparatus.

Further, the two gigantic *granadillas* of Figure 7 are balancing each other at the same time they are offsetting the levitating qualities of their containing basket. Figure 8 then demonstrates a stability of suspension of *granadilla* and the buoyancy of the small paper boat below and equilibrium between the *granadilla's* halves.

As a closing example, *Justicia: Azar y Precipicio* [Justice: Chance and Precipice] (Figure 9) displays the epitome of the manifested interconnectivity of suspension, flotation, and balance. Not only is the *granadilla*-headed *maquiladora* worker's upper body suspended in the air by a long vertical pole, her head, arms, and the black and white balls that she is balancing are hovering in the foreground of a framed blue sky. Correspondingly, the suspended state of the worker may also be viewed as a counterpart to the grounded condition of the *caudillo*.[40]

In general, act is a crucial characteristic of Miranda's paintings in creating a surreal environment. Through suspension, flotation, and balance, figures visually encode a dream narrative where they are able to freely move about the setting without conventions of gravitational restrictions. Nevertheless, in order to engender such an aura, the "other," more realistic, "side" is just as essential for its development—a side as clear

[40] I will further explain these two figures' significance in the "Agents" section.

and as deep as the scenes in which those figures act.

*Figure 5- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 6- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 7- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 8- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

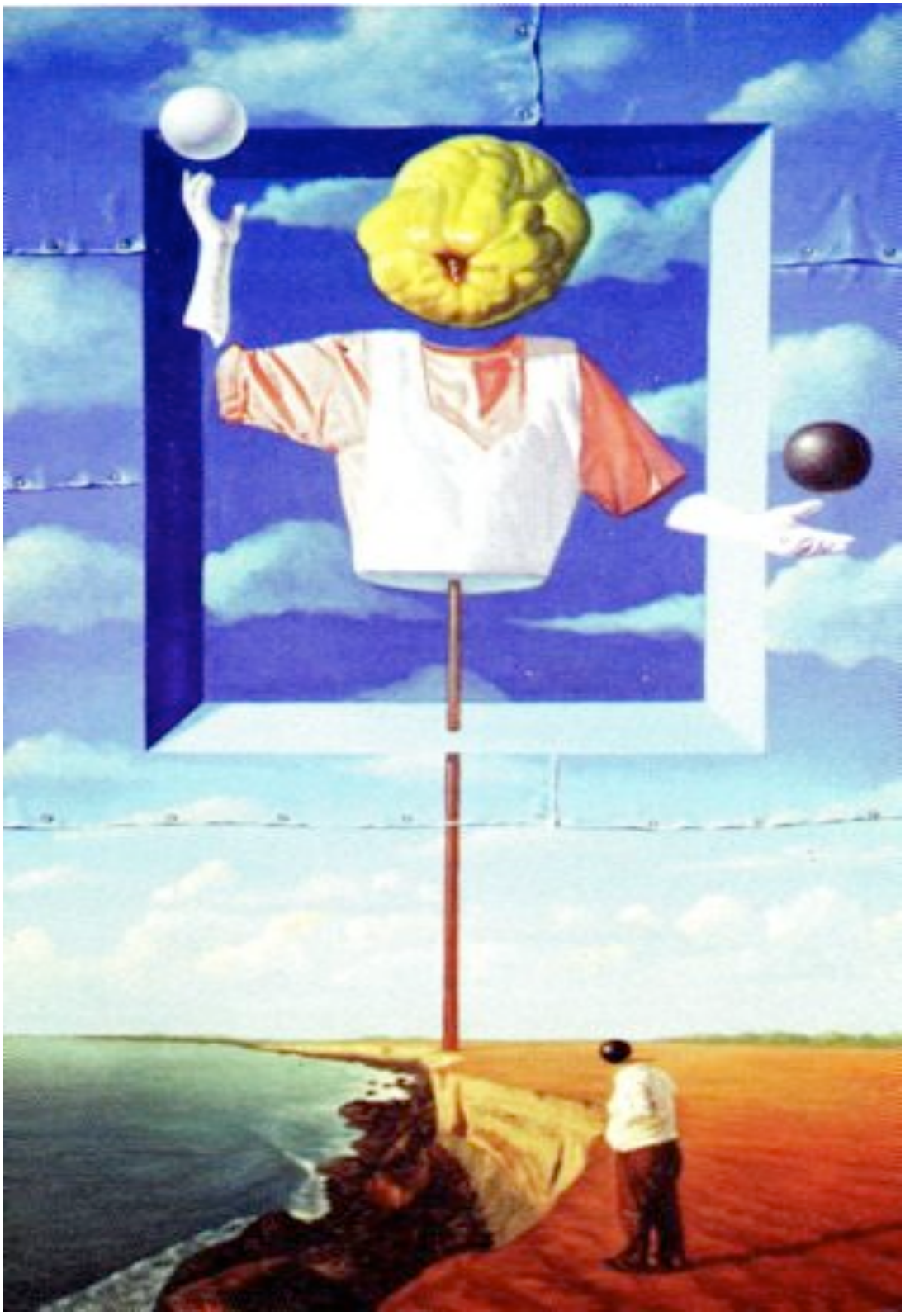

*Figure 9*- Justicia; Azar y Precipicio. (Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda. Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Scenes*

While to suspend and float and to balance are the most important and prominent acts to help communicate "the dream," that essence might not be articulated if it were not for the dialectical nature of those acts' relationship with the settings, or scenes in which they maneuver. These scenes are portrayed and/or negotiated not as particularly confounding or out of the ordinary entities (thus complementing the rather extraordinary acts). Nevertheless, Miranda's paintings reveal distinctive scenes. To that end, the present section shall be organized according to two categories—*layered environments* and *hyperopic perspectives*—because these are the two dominant settings in the paintings.

***Layered Environments*~** The most prominent and persistent scenic element expressed in Miranda's paintings is that of the all-encompassing sky. With only two exceptions,[41] every single sky scene is layered with another scenic element. Three are particularly dominant: (1) a sky-water layer; (2) a sky-land layer; and (3) sky-cloud-time layer.

First, the sky-water layer is a common feature of Miranda's paintings. In Figure 10, for example, a patchy, altocumulus-clouded sky spotlights the gigantic *granadilla* hanging center-stage. Not far below is an oasis-like lake circumscribed by a luscious green landscape; the lake mirrors the sky, almost giving the appearance that two stratospheres are on top of each other (the tiny *granadilla* just barely grazing the lake adds to this reflection effect).

Figure 11 follows a similar pattern but in a very different manner. In *Granadilla en Alta Mar* [*Granadilla* on the High Seas], the level of the waters rises to meet the semi-

[41] These two exceptions are featured as "Agents" Figure 22 and "Agencies" Figure 24.

turbulent sky, conveying a post-storm state. Unlike the placid lake of Figure 10, which *reflects* the cloudy sky above, Figure 11's high seas are a part *of* the sky itself; that is, they contribute to the visual construction of the sky. In this light, the collaborative color scheme of the sky-water layer especially forecasts this relationship; blues coalesce to make a descending light-to-dark contrast.

Similarly, like their sky-water kin, sky-land scenes further facilitate a visual enunciation of a layered scene circumstance via a lamination of sky and land formations. For example, the landscape of Figure 12, with its stunningly bright skies, mountainous backdrop, sparse greenery, and golden sand terrain, demonstrates this notion. In this painting, each geological formation is a clear expression of a blanket-effect: mountains sandwiched between sky and underbrush, *granadilla* and yellow sand mimicking each other, and tranquil pond and sky doing the same.

Figure 6 communicates a similar topography, but with more of a concentration on the mountains' peaks. In this sense, the high Rocky Mountain-looking snowcaps partake in co-creating a visual cornucopia of whites, azures, golden rods, and harlequins. Further, these color schematized land formations encode a climactic layer pattern where the mountains' peaks function as the literal scenic summit and clouds, sky, and violinist's bright green *granadilla* head and flaxen violin as one descending (descending-ascending) continuum and lake, shrubs, and terrain as the other (descending-descending).

Third, topping off the final scenic grouping is that of the sky-cloud-time layer where sky, clouds, and time constitute an overlapping dynamic. In general, the sky-cloud-time layer features sky as its sole scenic centerpiece. In particular, this

phenomenon is portrayed in two key ways: skies relative to their cloud formations and skies relative to a specific time of day or atmospheric condition.

In conjunction with skies and clouds, I will use the visual landscapes of Figures 13 and 14 to explain herein. For Figure 13, this sky's characteristics very much follow the traditional latter half of the ROY G BIV—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet—color gamut. Progressing from bottom to top, the cumulonimbus blue-hue accumulation culminates with white tufts; perhaps immediately foreshadowing a thunderstorm. Similarly, Figure 14, while deviating from that color convention, imparts a visualization of clouds illuminated by non-white light. The pink, purple, and blue hues congregate to make for a *transitional* type of overhead.

Such is the point at which skies in relation to time comes into play. A final major property of the layered environment category, then, is that of scenic transition. Dovetailing from the description of Figure 14's empyrean quality, these colors are able to coalesce in such a manner because of the *time of day*, i.e. sunrise, in which those clouds inhabit the sky. Figure 15 epitomizes this claim. Emanating a warm summer sunset stroll along a beach, this image captures the in-between (light-dark/day-night) nature that frequents the Miranda scene dynamic.

Further still, time is not only communicated in terms of a transitional sunrise/sunset process, but also via particular atmospheric conditions. As I have alluded to in Figure 13's account, that firmamental entity is perhaps forecasting a thunderstorm. In Figure 16, it is already underway. A *granadilla* holds an umbrella-like cover over its "head" to shield itself from the violent weather enshrouding it. In the meantime, tornadoes bolt out for the stygian storm clouds, touching down on the paradoxically mild

waters below. Comparing Figure 14 with Figure 16, since they are nearly mirror images of each other, it is remarkable at the kind of aura a scene can convey. With just a few adjustments of the air, a setting can segue from sunrise to storm, respectively, with just a blink of an eye.

The sky-water, sky-land, and sky-cloud-time layers are the three major elements constituting the overarching layered environments scene characteristic. With its presence, this condition facilitates a manifestation of lamination, imbrication, and transition. At this time, I would like to turn to the last major category as it itself performs as a layer for constituting the whole of scene.

***Hyperopic Perspectives*~** Also frequenting the curves of the scenes in which agents act is the important notion of hyperopic/hypermetropic perspective, or a condition/ability of viewing phenomena from a distance. While all of the paintings' scenes are imbued with a hyperopic perspective, I will focus on the portraits of the seven newly presented figures of this section—Figures 10-16—in so doing following the sequential order in which they are numbered.

As is evident in Figure 10, the milky welkin, reflection pool, and circumscribing foliage, as well as all other dramatistic components are farsightedly framed. Figure 11 quite fittingly captures the same hypermetropic essence in terms of a portrayal of the azure variations of sky and sea, as does Figure 12 with its mountainous surroundings and luminescent grounds.

In Figure 13, we see a weather balloon like *granadilla* from a long-shot view, which is further enhanced by the surrounding storm clouds. With contrasting weather

patterns yet comparative hyperopic characteristics, Figure 14 displays a bright yellow *granadilla* at a distance in the foreground with the background typical of a sky at sunrise.

Finally, Figure 15 portrays a *granadilla* sunset; its low light rays give off a glowing aura that only a long shot could fully capture. Figure 16 illustrates a cyclone scene where viewer may watch from a safe distance captivated by the beauty and yet destructive power of this natural disaster.

The hyperopic essence of the collective scene population is a prominent and persistent, even necessary asset. If it were not for this farsighted state of setting, the other scenic qualities of layered environments would be difficult, if not impossible to discern.

*Figure 10- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 11*- Granadilla en Alta Mar. *Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of artist, 2007.)

*Figure 12- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 13- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 14- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

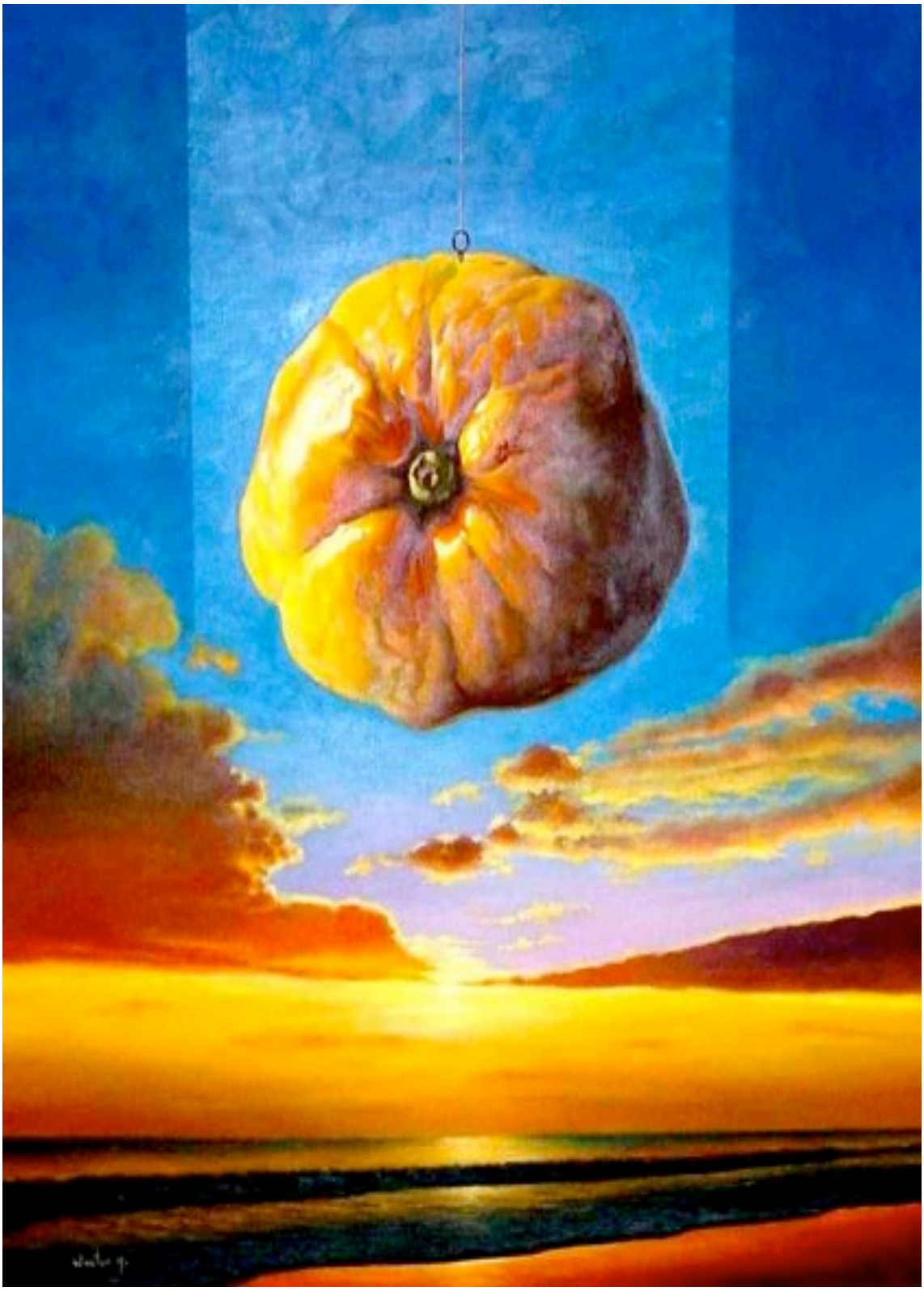

*Figure 15- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 16- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Agents*

Agent, the next pentadic term, occurs along a continuum from inanimate to animate agents. Inanimate, (human and nonhuman) animate, and in/animate hybrid figures parade and are paraded about the settings, making for a literal and figurative surreal experience. To follow, then, I will be organizing the agents of the Miranda dream in manifest according to three categories: (1) *inanimate agents*; (2) *animate agents*; and (3) *in/animate hybrid agents*.

To that end, the notion of transitive and intransitive action is a very important element and will become clearer and more comprehensible as I continue with the thesis. In general, transitive acts are those that involve circumstances in which animate and animated agents act on objects and/or other agents via agencies. Intransitive acts, by contrast, entail changes that inanimate agents and animated agents undergo (Banno, Ohno, Sakane, Shinagawa, and Tokashiki, 1999). I have chosen to save this information for the present section rather than including it in that of "Acts" is because it facilitates discussion about and description of the fine line between animate and inanimate figures and consequently agents and agencies (findings and analysis to come). Therefore, it is not necessarily a transitive act that helps to distinguish an agent, but rather those acts of suspension and flotation and balance (which themselves are transitive and intransitive in nature).

***Inanimate Agents*~** In the painting dream sequence, traditional nonliving objects "come to life" and act "on their own terms," or at least "undergo" some act therein. In this sense, inanimate figures are not necessarily animat*ed* (and/or personified) although

they very well may be. These dynamics are made manifest through two very important elements: *granadillas* and paper objects.

First, unarguably the *granadilla* is the most prominent and frequent agent, as it appears 37 times[42] in 26 of the 28 works. Likewise, except for the few circumstances that will be spotlighted in the *In/Animate Hybrid Agents* section, the *granadilla* is usually not animated or personified and thus intransitively acts. For instance, in Figure 17, the *granadilla* may be considered an agent because it is floating in the air and a spinning top is hanging from it.

Second, paper objects hold many of the same agent characteristics as *granadillas* except that they are more often animated and/or anthropomorphized. As has been indicated with Figure 5, the paper bird is an agent because it is flying; it is also one in Figure 8 since it is floating on water. Likewise, *Barco de Papel y Granadilla* (Figure 18) illustrates a paper boat in more of a personified role because it is flying a kite.

***Animate Agents*~** On the next extreme of the agent spectrum is that of animate characters. In this category, these standard living agents consist of both nonhuman and human beings that/who are inevitably transitively acting. For the former, butterflies are the most intensely portrayed actor (manifest five times in three paintings; four red and one yellow) while the latter comprises babies (manifest two times in two paintings).

First, butterflies are at the forefront of the nonhuman animate agent prototype. To that end, wherever there is a butterfly, there is usually some object following not far behind. In Figure 12, to illustrate, a butterfly is in a personified agent position because it

[42] While this tropical fruit appears many times in fragments, I consider a whole *granadilla* as one count. Moreover, this tally also includes *granadilla* agents that will be highlighted in the *In/Animate Hybrid Agents* section.

is dragging a small *granadilla* behind it, as in Figure 21. Additionally, the red butterfly of Figure 19 is a character of action since it is lugging a petite-sized violin.

On the flip side, babies are typical of the human animate agent archetype. In *Niño* [Baby Boy] (Figure 20), this infant is an agent because he is floating in the air in order to play with the gift held out before him. This same holds true with the "agenticized" baby of Figure 24 who sits poised on a ladder joyfully amused by a large bubble floating before his eyes.

So far, I have discussed the inanimate and animate agents that constitute the dream element aggregate. The most prominent inanimate agents include *granadillas* and paper objects (which are often animated), while the most obvious animate agents include babies and butterflies. The next section deals with agents that do not fall neatly under inanimate or animate agents but rather have characteristics of both.

***In/Animate Hybrid Agents*~** Frequently and intensely what transpire in Miranda's paintings are agents who fall neither in the inanimate or animate embodiments but rather both—inanimate-animate hybrids who confuse that dichotomy. What makes these characters "in-betweenies" are their physical attributions—appearing, for example, with splices of human shape and Frankenstein-like fruit replaced body parts—and their amalgamated transitive and intransitive acts. Since there are several in/animate hybrid individuals who help co-create the current category, I will list and describe them individually as opposed to separate groupings. They will appear as follows: violinists, pope, lovers, guardian, *maquila* worker and *caudillo* [political-military leader], and Winston Miranda.

One particularly noteworthy agent is that of the violinists who emerge in two paintings (Figure 6 and Figure 21). Both violinists appear as animate for several reasons: they dress like humans, they have the same upper body shape as humans, they play music like humans, and they achieve the same upper posture as humans might. However, correspondingly they also are inanimate (although animatedly so) because they float like phantoms; have *granadilla* heads; and, aside from their musical instruments, long-sleeved shirts, and (in/organically im/planted) heads, are invisible! In essence, the phantom violinists are agents because they (parts of them) transitively and intransitively are suspended/suspending, float/ing, and balance/ing.

A second in/animate hybrid agent is that of the pope (Figure 22). The pope has similar clothes and bodily features as the violinists; however, he conveys a whole different aura. The pope is a ghostly kind of agent. His low "stance" and white-cloaked body in addition to the surrounding environment[43] produce an inescapably haunting feel, thus establishing him as a prime in/transitive character. Moreover, the pope is a manifestation of a very societal-specific role; he is the representative leader of the Catholic church. It is interesting to see, then, that this religious head has no literal head in the painting.

*Los Amentes* [The Lovers] (Figure 23) constitutes the third in/animate hybrid agents. This couple communicates sheer passion: interlocked in an embrace of everlasting effervescence, bodies madly twisted together as is love on their psyches. Unlike the scenes of the violinists and pope, the lovers are not "reminded" of the gravitational pull of the ground below (none is in sight), and thus succumb to the

[43] This environment is one of the exceptions alluded to in the "Scenes" section. Its exceptional quality, especially in terms of color, will be elaborated upon in "Agencies" to follow.

pleasures of not only the freedom of their physical place and surroundings, but also to a moment of literally giving a bit of themselves to each other—"the eyes" of the masked lover's "face" are floating inside the invisible space where their sternums meet.

The fourth in/animate hybrid agent—the guardian—embodies a similar sort of love and passion, but in terms of child rearing, in light of its intransitive and transitive jubilant expressions. This *granadilla* headed guardian, with its outstretched "arms" and long-sleeved-white-dress-shirt-shaped imperceptible body, seems to be simultaneously supporting and supported by the baby-clad ladder (Figure 24).

Fifth, the *maquila* worker and *caudillo* of *Justicia: Azar y Precipicio* (Figure 9) are paramount in/animate hybrid characters of the agent aggregate.[44] Like the socio-religious role-specific quality embodied by the pope via his cassock and zucchetto, the socio-economic role of the *maquila* worker is encoded through her uniform (style), as is that of her sex (color).[45] *Maquilas*,[46] or "the Mexican term for factories that assemble components, often of U.S. origin, for export to world markets" (Tiano, 1994, p. 1), while most commonly associated with the deluge of manufacturing plants that line the U.S.-Mexico border on the Mexico (particularly in Juárez[47]) side,[48] are also an important part

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[44] Also informing my analysis of both the *maquila* worker and *caudillo* is Lovo's (2002) brief interpretation of *Justicia* in *Cultura de Paz*.

[45] While not providing this specific degree of information, in our discussion Miranda did reveal that the clothing presented here on the stilted character is a "worker's uniform" (personal communication, July 23, 2007). On a similar note, while not the exact same style, as the uniform here acts as a hyperbole to hyper-emphasize the gender, socio-economic role of the *maquila* worker, the painting uniform resembles those captured in the photography of Julián Cardona. Visit, for instance, <http://www.almargen.com.mx/ensayo.php?IDNOTA=822&imagen=1>

[46] *Maquila* is shorthand for *maquiladora*.

[47] The Juárez *maquila* population especially has been at the forefront of popular media (e.g. Broeske, 2006) and academic research (e.g. Fragoso, 2003; Volk & Schlotterbeck, 2007; Wright, 2001, 2004) because of its relationship with the mass femicide, or female homicide epidemic that has spread across Central America including Nicaragua, although not nearly as frequent as other countries like Mexico, Guatemala,

of the Nicaraguan economy (e.g. Bandy & Mendez, 2003; Prieto-Carrón, 2007). To that end, a prominent characteristic of *maquila* work is that it is highly gender segregated with women occupying the majority of assembly-labor intensive positions and men supervisory and technical ones (Bandy & Mendez, 2003).[49]

Thus, the *maquila* worker is a very important and intensely portrayed agent in this painting. What constitutes her as a hybrid agent is not solely her work uniform, but rather that she is synchronically enacting both intransitive and transitive roles—she is balancing the black and white balls and her upper body is being suspended in the air by a wooden pole. In addition, like the other hybrid characters, her physical attributions include inanimate and animate qualities, such as the *granadilla* head (inanimate) and her human-like upper body shape and motion (animate).

The *caudillo* follows a similar rationale. In essence, what manifests his socio-economic-gender-specific role is his paradoxical physical location (down below at the foot of a precipice) relative to the *maquila* worker and his physical bodily state of over-

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and El Salvador (see for instance, Prieto-Carrón, Thomson, & Macdonald, 2007). In this light, scholars and activists (for instance, the first and only sexual assault and rape crisis center in Juárez, *Casa Amiga*) have spearheaded a popular acknowledgment of the theoretical ties between the expendable nature of the temporary female labor reserve of *maquila* employment and that of the "disposable, worthless" woman myth (where *maquila* women are often locked in a gender dichotomous bind between being dejected for their "masculine" roles as wage labor workers and a societal dependence upon them to be such earners).

[48] According to Wright (2001), "There are more than 3,000 maquilas, employing almost a million workers throughout the country [Mexico], with Ciudad Juárez claiming almost 400 facilities and about 250,000 maquila employees" (p. 554).

[49] In fact, while we were in Nicaragua our class had the opportunity to attend a meeting organized by Carrie McCracken, former instructor at the Institute for Central American Development Studies and current co-director of Viva Nicaragua!, where several local Granada *maquila* workers (12 of the total 39 women who attended the meeting worked at *maquilas*), who had been members of the local women's nongovernmental organization (NGO) *Casa de la Mujer* [Women's House] and who at the time had spearheaded a project called *Paz y Vida* [Peace and Life] to build new houses for themselves, spoke about the harsh and low pay working conditions of the factories in which they are employed. For instance, one 23-year old woman and mother of two had explained that she works in a *maquila* sewing bathing suits and makes 1200 *cordoba* (roughly $63) per month. While she currently lives with her mother-in-law, she is being thrown out and must raise $450 to purchase her own house. In the meantime, the father of the children remains absent (personal communication, July 12, 2007).

weightiness. Likewise, what manifests him as an in/animate hybrid agent is his blackball head (inanimate) and physical shape and positioning (animate).

Finally, Miranda himself appears as a character of in/animate hybridity. In *La Creación del Arte* [The Creation of Art] (Figure 1), contrary to his whole, animate-waking self, Miranda is a fragmented, yet fully mobile mannequin figure with his face afloat the air, segmented from the rest of his body, and his plastic-pole arm held rigidly vertical to steady a large yellow *granadilla* on a slim red paintbrush. In addition to his already paradoxical self, Miranda is at once caught between an environmental freedom and a sheer concentration on the task of poising the massive *granadilla*.

Overall, agent is a necessary element for manifesting the collective oneiric narrative. With inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid agents transitively and intransitively gracing the stage, they pivotally facilitate a distinction of a clearly surreal aura. In the section to follow, then, I will explain what specific tools—the pentadic element of agency—are needed to facilitate that facilitation.

*Figure 17- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 18*- Barco de Papel y Granadilla*. Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda*. (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of artist, 2007.)

*Figure 19- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 20*- Niño. *Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of artist, 2007.)

*Figure 21- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 22*- Ofrenda. *Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 23*- Los Amantes. *Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Agencies*

With bizarre agents floating, suspending, and balancing about the layered and "hyperopically" glistening landscape, there are strong instruments being utilized to catalyze such endeavors. These instruments are the focus of the present section. While perhaps not as expeditiously distinguishable as that of agent, agencies nonetheless play a critical part in the overall maintenance and performance of the Miranda dream. I will pinpoint and elaborate upon two agency-centered themes: *tools of transition* and *containers*.

***Tools of Transition~*** One major "tool of choice" used by agents to float, suspend, and balance is that of transition. All inclusively, a tool of transition is a channel that facilitates movement, passage, and/or change from one place, state, or entity to another. In the dream collective, tools of transition take on many forms; however, I will identify those forms relative to two tool-of-transition categories: *point-to-point agencies* and *open-ended agencies*.

First, point-to-point agencies are those transitional tools that "bridge," or directly connect two places, states, entities, etc.—an "A to B" kind of concept. To that end, structurally they construct straight lines, where any point, then, may fall on that line and still be considered a part of the point-to-point dynamic, and direction is consequently limited between the two end points (A to B and B to A). Furthermore, the overarching physical characteristic of these kinds of instruments is that they are fairly linearly shaped (hence line) objects, as the point-to-point agencies of the collective paintings' agents include: ladders, stairs, keys, violins, precipice, rods/poles, and strings.

In Figure 21, for example, a wooden ladder links the ground ("point A/B") with the bottom opening of a *granadilla* ("point B/A"). The same characteristic can be found in Figure 24, except that there is an intervening central point: a baby. Thus, the point-to-point pattern of the ladder in 24 helps to support the suspension of the guardian and baby and balance between ground and guardian above.

The stairs of *Ofrenda* (Figure 22) operate in very much the same way as do the ladders. Here, the stairs seem to manifest a connection between where the pope levitates and where the *granadilla* is "from." Likewise, the keys of Figures 19 and 28 render a straight path between "un-locker" and lock/window (i.e. "un-lockee") and thus "free" that particular piece of *granadilla* to float in the air. Violins, appearing in Figures 6, 10, 19, 21, and 26, may function as point-to-point agencies because they tangibly tie the musicians' supporting hand with the supporting shoulder (6 and 21) and consequently become that which is suspended, fill-in-the-blanks between floating or suspended figures and the water below (10 and 19), and transition continuum-style (small, medium, and large, and vice versa) between *granadillas* (26).

The precipice in *Justicia* (Figure 9) also is employed as a transitional tool, but via a paradoxically divergent manner. In functioning as a rift between the desert floor to the right and sea to the left, it simultaneously acts as a juncture and balance therein. What is more, just above is a pole, another type of point-to-point tool, supporting and jointing the *maquila* worker hoisted in the sky with the barren terrain below. The pole is seen again in Figures 14 and 16 where a triple-pole effect is piercing a *granadilla* to help suspend it and in Miranda's self-portrait (*La Creación del Arte*; Figure 1) where he is

unconventionally using a paintbrush as one to balance/suspend a very large golden *granadilla*.

As a final example of point-to-point transitional utensils, strings are vital in facilitating the suspension and (controlled) flotation of dream entities—utilized by the agents of 18 paintings. As in *Niño* (Figure 20), a thick rope is used to dangle a huge red present before a floating baby, while the strings of Figure 2 are being deployed to anchor a *granadilla* balloon. Even the strings of the violins may be considered "micro-" point-to-points because they help to create the linear taut tension between the neck and base of the instrument to varying degrees (thus facilitating the construction of a tonal range; manifestation of the suspension of sound).

Second, like point-to-point agencies, open-ended instruments facilitate movement, passage, and/or change from one place, state, or entity to another (which then help agents to suspend, float, and balance). However, unlike point-to-points, open-ended tools are those transitions that may start with a fixed point, but then have no definite conclusion. In this light, where point-to-point agencies geometrically constitute straight lines, open-ended utensils contour a dimensionally riveted model. Open-ended tools take on a variety of physical shapes, but none are linearly based. The following include the most intensely and frequently applied: windows, shapes of *granadilla*, colors, white materials, spinning tops and balls, and water.

Analogous with the (inanimate) agent *granadilla*, the window is the most recurring, non-*granadilla* based agency, emerging 21 times in 17 paintings. Moreover, the window of the Miranda dream is not the same kind of window you see on a day-to-day basis; it is embedded not in walls of buildings, but in people, fruit, and even skies!

The window is a preeminent tool of open-endedness because it may begin with/in a fixed point and then may "open up" to a whole new and limitless dimension (which is where the scenic hyperopic perspective may come into play). To that end, the "blinds are never pulled," that is, windows are never shut and their "coverings" (the cubical pieces cut out of objects to make the windows) are always floating in the air nearby. In Figure 25, for instance, a window appears in a *granadilla* (a determined point), yet extends outward toward the unbounded blue sky, which is accentuated by the *granadilla's* dispersive cutouts. In fact, as in Figures 13 and 17, windows are even constructed in the skies themselves as well as in active agents such as the baby in *Niño* and the guardian in Figure 24. The windows subsequently facilitate balance between one viewpoint (e.g. that of the first sky's and *granadilla's*) and another (that which is beyond the first fixed point) and flotation and suspension because they help to display the airiness of gravity-defying figures and eliminate the weightiness of hanging ones.

A second important open-ended agency manifestation is shape, particularly that of the *granadilla*. Shapes of *granadillas* are important because they embody open-ended spatial transition within a relationship between figure and ground.[50] The manifest shapes of Figures 5 and 26 may serve as visual justifications herein. Figure 5 highlights the *granadilla's* mimicry of the double islets in the background: each quarter and three-fourths sections of figure replicate the small and large masses aback. In so doing, a transition and subsequent balance transpires across not only the flotation/suspension acts of the agent itself, but also the whole of the painting. For *Granadilla Stradivarius* (Figure 26), the shape of the Stradivarius violin performs as a starting point for an

[50] In fact, in our interview Miranda explains that shape is one of the major characteristics that inspires him to use it as his signature element. The other two are relative to its color and that it represents the tropical atmosphere of his childhood home (personal communication, July 23, 2007).

echoing of the *granadilla's* geometric form (as the painting's title implies). Furthermore, the *granadilla's* explicit slicing and separating of the two halves may function as a visual hyperbole to illustrate its open-ended dimensionality and transitional and balancing qualities.

Third, in the same manner that *granadilla* shapes facilitate spatial transition, colors, as alluded to in footnote 39 and *Layered Environments*, help to create fluid open-ended temporal movement. Under the "sky-cloud-time layer" category, I have argued that, "these [alluding to Figure 14] colors are able to coalesce in such a manner because of the time of day, i.e. sunrise, in which those clouds inhabit the sky" (see page 69). However, in light of the nature of a construction of the paintings themselves and the nature of the tools of the agent of these paintings, I would also argue that the time of day is able to transpire because of the facilitation of the coalescence of those colors themselves. Yet it is not only time of day and atmospheric condition that may be communicated via colors; certainly those acts of balance, suspension, and flotation inevitably are too (although those scenic elements are not mutually exclusive from these acts as I shall explain shortly in the *Containers* section).

Take, for instance, Figures 22 (*Ofrenda*) and 24, while these two works are the exceptions to the rule of "layered conventional environments," they are so for a very important, although not entirely separate, purpose: their respective stark purple and red skies manifest an extreme exaggeration of the open-ended power of color itself in facilitating a literal change of the aura of one's atmosphere, for the better and for the

worst:[51] why are these moments and spaces, guardian with outstretched arms and cryptic pope hovering before a red-carpeted staircase, literally suspended (frozen) via their respective colors?[52]

As for white materials, which collectively comprise a fourth example of open-ended agencies, these elements combine both color and a pliable source to convey a transitional type of medium. In general, these objects consist of customary items like blank paper (Figures 5, 8, 12, 18, 19, 27, 28, and 30) and cloth materials including clothes (explicitly long-sleeved shirts, Figures 21 and 24; t-shirt, Figure 6; uniform, Figure 9; and cassock and *zucchetto*,[53] Figure 22) and bed sheet (Figure 1). For instance, the manifest open-ended nature of the violinists' (6 and 21) and guardian's (24) white shirts is conveyed via fixed points of the upper bodies (i.e. collars) and concomitant uninterrupted shirttails: there are no visible lower body halves (including waist lines) where their shirts may be tucked in and thus "terminated."

This is also visible with the transitional workings of blank paper materials (Figures 19, 27, and 28). Wherever there are unfolded, wrinkled blank sheets of paper they are always laid out as if functioning as a cushion between a *granadilla* or *granadillas* and a container (more on this agency in the *Containers* category), such as a

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[51] I had thought about this dynamic of power of color in catalyzing a change of environment my first morning in Granada. The magnificent visual cornucopia of colored pink, blue, purple, green, yellow, and orange homes, one right after another, seemed to manifest that notion of "the wild eye that traces all its colors back to the rainbow" as alluded to in the Breton epigraph of the present chapter. I had the opportunity to witness this again during my first experience of crossing the Mexico-U.S. border into Juárez in January 2008; the brilliance and abundance of color really seems to "catch the eye." This is a curious phenomenon; what kinds of rhetorical implications are imbedded in a speculative connection between urban housing in poor Latin American countries like Nicaragua and Mexico and color?

[52] If it were not for this manifested temporal suspension characteristic via color, I would have included *Ofrenda* with the other three works not simultaneously featuring suspension and floatation, because the figures in the painting themselves are only floating.

[53] A *zucchetto* is a Roman Catholic cleric's skullcap: black for a priest, purple for a bishop, red for a cardinal, and white for the pope.

wicker basket. The edges that then stick out of the *granadilla*-laden containers "open-endedly" drift and even drip, such as in Figure 27, into the surrounding air or elsewhere. In this process, the paper sheets help to balance out the suspended acts of the *granadillas* and flotation of the containers. Moreover, even the *origami*-style birds' and boats' folded patterns (5, 8, 12, 18, and 30) facilitate flotation because those particular folds (fixed points) actually give the otherwise blank sheets of paper shape to accomplish their "natural" acts (open-ended dimensions).

Fifth, spinning tops and balls are open-ended transitional agencies that enable agents to suspend, float, and balance. The spinning top in *Granadilla en Alta Mar* (Figure 11), to illustrate, is at one point linked to the ship-like *granadilla* above by the point-to-point agency of string and then proceeds to unreservedly navigate "the ship" through choppy waters by way of a non-linear path (since it is spinning to the destination). In that process, it balances the tempestuous ocean waves and the *granadilla* all while simultaneously being suspended by that massive fruit.

Balls, are similar to spinning tops, but embody a different motion and thus a disparate effect; instead of manifesting spinning they manifest vacillation. As in *Justicia*, the balls may function the same way that Lady Justice's scales operate to convey balance (as the *maquila* worker acts as an agentic seesaw therein) by initiating a particular equilibrium point at one end (grip/hands) and an openness of the balancing/bouncing/juggling/floating motion itself on the other (sky).

Last, water plays an important role as an open-ended agency. Ironically, it is also the first of four agent/scene- (in this case scene-) crossover tools. This element, while paramount for manifesting a sky-water layered environment effect, is also necessary for

transitional processes of suspension, flotation, and balance. Bodies of water are at once fixed and open-ended; they are geographically positioned while their currents travel in multiple directions and may drift to sundry destinations. This is visible in *Granadilla Stradivarius* (Figure 26) where the lake assists the basket's travel with the smaller *granadillas* and in Figure 8 where the paper boat is afloat therein.

Point-to-point and open-ended agencies are those tools of transition that facilitate agents' acts of suspension, flotation, and balance. Point-to-point tools are those that linearly connect one entity to another while open-ended instruments begin with a fixed point only to unboundedly expand in all directions. I would now like to turn to a final type of agency present in the Miranda painting aggregate in the following section.

***Containers*~** A second overarching agency frequently and intensely utilized by agents is that of the container. A container is an entity that has the capacity to hold and/or carry materials, which then essentially functions to help processes of suspension, flotation, and balance. In the dream collective, both familiar and unfamiliar types of containers are used, including: boats; baskets and pots; frames; and people, skies, and *granadillas*.

First, boats are one type of container employed by agents in the overall painting dream. While traditionally used to carry such things as passengers and cargo, surreal boats now become unconventional vessels by which to transport very unexpected materials. For instance, in Figure 27 a tiny dinghy becomes the loading craft for a Herculean-sized, gleaming *granadilla* moon and a colossal mass of white paper that is facilitating the "pouring" of the contents. The dinghy then facilitates the balancing of the load and its consequent transportation.

Likewise, baskets and pots recurrently appear in the dream as containers of suspension, flotation, and balance facilitation. The gargantuan baskets of Figure 7 and 19, to that end, help to balance the twin-sets of *granadillas* within and also suspend them in the air without. Figure 28's paper-covered pot transports a similar load, with the stem side of a lime-green *granadilla* resting on the foreground ledge.

Third, frames are a type of container that facilitates the surreal acts of the agents in the painting. In a conventional sense, frames are two-dimensional figures that hold two-dimensional iconic objects. However, in the collective Miranda dream, frames are unconventional containers because they function to hold a variety of materials, including agents. Furthermore, frames are generally different from windows in that their primary purpose is to contain while windows operate as transitional agencies; the former does not necessarily offer an extended view while the latter does. Nonetheless, frames and windows are not mutually exclusive; indeed, windows inevitably come complete with and are circumscribed by frames, yet, the inverse to the same principle does not hold (frames do not always come complete with windows).

The frame in *Justicia*, for instance, encompasses the *maquila* worker and balances her directly in the center and even freeze-frames her in time, like the purple *Ofrenda* sky, in the process. Figure 29's blue-and-golden frame is a bit more overtly displayed and conveys a triple-layered view dynamic: the outside environment circumscribes the blatantly garnished central frame, which then borders a suspended *granadilla*, which then crops a small window. What this painting consequently manifests is the notion that the *granadilla* itself may serve as a type of three-dimensional frame and thus become a container in its own right.

Finally, people, skies, and *granadillas* may function as unfamiliar types of containers. In that vein, they are not only frames, but, like water, also are three-dimensional agent-/scenic-crossovers. The baby in *Niño* (Figure 20), to demonstrate, is a type of special frame because of the similar situation mentioned above with the *granadilla*; it houses a window and thus axiomatically becomes its container/suspender. Interestingly, sky then becomes an agency itself for very much the same reason. Figure 18 is an epitomic example because the sky becomes a multidimensional frame for the window whose screen is synchronically being used as a head of a kite (the sky in an agency twofold because it is a frame and a material by which to fashion a kite). In 13 and 17 those skies are also containers because of their encircled windows that reveal another "deeper" level.

As a concluding example, the *granadilla* is indeed a unique and dimensional frame, for instance in Figure 28 it is both container (girding a window) and contained (suspended by a pot). Yet, even when it is not a frame for a window, it is a potential container for another entity. Figure 30, illustrates a form of a *granadilla* in which it is not a frame per se, but still a container. Here, a *granadilla* is split wide-open exposing its inner anatomy: a white fleshy pulp with a deep, central space for seeds. Yet, in all of the 37 times that a *granadilla* appears, especially those times when it is sliced and split apart (Figures 2, 5, 8, 17, 22, 26, and 30), seeds are never present (they are gutted out). While the *granadillas* of the painting aggregate certainly have the capacity to hold such an entity, it is quite curious as to why their seeds are always absent.

Tools of transition, point-to-point and open-ended, and containers are two preeminent agencies that promote the suspension, flotation, and balance of inanimate,

animate, and in/animate hybrid agents. Whereas the former constitutes a medium that assists movement, passage, and/or change from one place, state, or entity to another, the latter is its complementation via a facilitating capacity to hold and/or carry materials. However, a most important inquiry still remains in the recesses of the elements of the paintings themselves: *why* are these eccentric characters doing as they are?

*Figure 24- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 25- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 26*- Granadilla Stradivarius. *Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda*. (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of artist, 2007.)

*Figure 27- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 28- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 29- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Figure 30- Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of *Edificio Pellas* art museum with permission of the artist, 2007.)

*Purpose*

Looking back across the surreal manifestations of acts, scenes, agents, and agencies, we arrive at the final pentadic element: purpose. While perhaps not as clearly discernable as those of its four predecessors, there is an all-encompassing reason or purpose for why those elements have panned out the way that they have: *to show/to be shown*.

With eye-popping agents in a perfectly balanced hyperopic (i.e. staged) focus, amid such distinctly breathtaking or torrentially captivating scenes, performing extraordinary acts that people imagine doing only in their wildest, dare I say it, dreams, it is as if those characters are beckoning, nay, demanding the viewer's attention. A strong desire seems to be manifest in the painting aggregate whereby figures yearn to show and be shown to perhaps a just as eager or at least anticipative audience.

*Dream Summary*

Layer I constitutes a critical investigation of the pentadic manifestations within Miranda's paintings. For acts, agents and agencies suspend (hang, support, or drag entities in air); float (move, hover, or drift in water or air); and balance (arrange, adjust, or proportion parts to engender equilibrium). Scenes complement those rather unconventional methods of "transportation" through spectacular farsighted freeze-framings of environments, including between, among, and across layers of sky, water, land formations, and clouds and time.

Within that alchemic matrix arise three uncanny figures, inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid agents, who intransitively and transitively further perplex and enhance the surreal stirrings of the cumulative painting drama. They do so with the aid of

unfamiliar tools, including point-to-point and open-ended tools of transition and containers of various sorts. In the end, all elements congregate together to show themselves/to be showcased as dream performers. The next layer of "Play" will reveal the behind-the-scene scoop of the person operating the dream as well as the latent machinations guiding those operations. And so, as they say, "the show must go on!"

**Layer II: Play**

It is increasingly becoming clear that a performance is transpiring through and, of course, "between" (Schechner, 2006) the epiphanic folds/unfolding of signifiers upon signifiers (units of pentadic elements upon units of pentadic elements) that seem to crave to "tell us something more." According to American scholar of puppetry and folklore Frank Proschan (1983), *puppets* are "material images of humans, animals or spirits that are created, displayed, or manipulated in narrative or dramatic performance." Moreover, those material images showcase an "iconicity…between a material object (signifier) and the animate being for which it stands" (p. 4). This materialized notion of puppets, I argue, is the missing link connecting all—act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose—dream collective manifestations. *Granadillas* are marionettes that dangle by aid of strings and in/animate hybrid agents rod puppets protruded into the sky from below. Even superficially free-floating figures, including animate ones, perspicuously become props (including containers) for an umbrella exposition of the dream drama itself.

Scenes are agencies, agencies agents, and agents, in light of a "puppetic" approach, are scenes (sites for possibility). Acts, then, themselves become agencies for carrying and showing their pentadic kin: asserts Sinclair (1995), "Puppets are active participants, not static decorative objects" (p. xiii). Finally, the culminating element of

purpose comes full-circle in itself becoming an inseparable in/transitively, inanimately flurried act of "the animate being for which it [the puppet] stands." A defining point at which not only do those "true living" beings "animate a sign vehicle from the *inside out*," but also "using their own feelings, bodies, and voices…inhabit the sign vehicle from the *outside in*" (Kaplin, 2001, p. 19; my emphasis).

The present section is a transitional stage of a re-suturing of the now floating (pun intended) "surrealism-in-manifest" signifiers and their latent/signified bodies. Puppetry, then, will become not only a materialized performance, but also a powerful metaphor that may provide a useful rhetorical frame in which to understand Miranda's own personal intentions for his double-medium (painting and puppetry) puppet show. If puppet is, from Proschan's (1983) perspective, that material image of human, animal or spirit, which is created, displayed, or manipulated, then *puppetry* is the process by which "puppets can be brought to life" (Sinclair, 1995, p. xiii).

I am not suggesting that Miranda consciously assumed this metaphor as part of a strategic rhetorical plan—the beauty and even irony of it all. It is as if Miranda's paintings are an epiphanic awakening of an unconscious boiling of a collectivity of those manifest pentadic elements, yes, but also a whole entourage of historically embedded acts, scenes, agents, agencies, and purposes before him that then become characteristic of/conveyed through the sign-work of the two mediums of puppetry and painting.

In fact, that Miranda in/transitively amalgamates different dramatistic elements provides the pivotal condition for a puppetry metaphor: a puppet itself, according to Tillis (1992), is an entity of "double-vision," a contradictory "perceived object and [a] psychologically imagined life" (p. 59). To that end, a puppet also is inevitably a

pentadic-element mixing matrix. It is act: "Every puppet must have the potential for movement" (Sinclair, 1995, p. 12)—if a puppet is not act (have the potential for movement) it is not a puppet. It is scene: "If the signification of life can be created by people, then the site [scene] of that signification is to be considered a puppet" (Tillis, 2001, p. 178). It is agent: "A puppet is more than dead wood or flat leather animated by human actors [puppeteers]…puppets actually constitute second beings who interact with the human actors…[and] are suffused with a life force capable of transforming those who play with and through them" (Schechner, 2006, p. 203). A puppet is agency: a "transitional object" that exclusively constitutes neither social actor nor its material self (Winnicott, 1971) but a translated life. A puppet is purpose: an entity of play to make-believe and make-belief (Schechner, 2006).

A second bridge with the notion of puppetry for Miranda is evident in the Western cultural pun allotted to this concept. On one hand, "talking head," "political puppet," "you're pulling my strings" and even "puppet of the system" are a few of the idiomatic expressions that are negatively associated with puppetry. On the other hand, puppetry, as alluded to above, is a highly artistic channel through which a person may express him or herself in imaginative ways they otherwise would not be able to do. As Sinclair (1995) asserts:

> Through puppetry, we accept the outrageous, the absurd or even the impossible, and will permit puppets to say and do things that no human could. We will: talk to a puppet (when no one else can get us to speak). Smile at a puppet (even if we have not been introduced). Allow a puppet to touch us (when a person would lose an arm for the same offence). (p. 3)

Around the globe and throughout history puppetry has been acknowledged as a viable tool in education, development of motor skills, health programs, and physical and psychological trauma recovery (Frey, 2006; Sinclair, 1995). In general, as a 4,000-year-old world practice, puppetry has developed a "great scope as a liberating performance art" (Currell, 1992, p. 6) despite the negative connotations that may have "tagged along" in the West.

Given puppetry's paradoxical position as a cross-pentadic border fusion and culturally instilled double-edged idiom, I suggest that it functions as Miranda's translatory medium through which to process, infuse, and make accessible his dream-art language to audiences across cultures. In the first place, Miranda's work is naturally a heritage of other artists' artworks before him, surrealist and otherwise. In our interview, Craven commented on Miranda's surrealist work[54] as "a map" that uses an eclectic vocabulary of artists such as Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte (1898-1967),[55] Puerto Rican impressionist founder Francisco Oller (1833-1917),[56] French realist painter Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dalí (1904-1989),[57] and Nicaraguan surrealist artist Armando Morales[58] (see footnote 32). Providing a synopsis

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[54] Craven also commented upon Miranda's primitivist paintings where he likened them to Russian Jewish painter Marc Chagall and Nicaraguan artist Alejandro Aróstegui's works.

[55] Craven aligns Miranda's work with Magritte's because of the similarities between the two with using oversized fruit that defies gravity (personal communication, January 17, 2008).

[56] With regard to Oller's work, Craven identifies that vocabulary in Miranda's art language because he translated European still-life paintings into a Caribbean language by using fruits like guava and mangoes instead of apples and oranges just like Miranda uses the *granadilla* (personal communication, January 17, 2008).

[57] Dalí's work is referenced because of the similar notions of body fragmentation that Miranda often uses for (quasi-in/animate) agents.

[58] Miranda's work is compared with Morales's because of the comparable style of boats and brilliant skies they both use.

of why locating a painting's originating voices, like those in Miranda's, is an important first step in lieu of translating that work, Craven states:

> Because we all use a language that has been forged by other people, you [me] and I [Craven] are speaking English—we didn't invent it right now, we're just using it; artists do the same thing. One of the things that is always important to emphasize when you talk about the visual arts, is the language the artist is coming out of. All art comes from other art even as it also entails infusions from other places, from other cultures, for other visual traditions. Getting that helps you really locate the place of the others quite effectively. (personal communication, January 17, 2008)

Accordingly, my suggestion that Miranda uses puppetry as a channel to translate his dreams/paintings is a key to understanding the next step; after locating these voices, that is, determining the visual language itself we transform them. This is precisely the idea that Frankfurt School philosopher of art Walter Benjamin (1968) alludes to in his theories of "translation" and "aura." For aura, Benjamin investigates the origins of a work of art in relation to a drastic new epoch evoked by methods of mass mechanical reproduction. Aura refers to the essence or "authenticity" of an original work of art's particular existence in time and space. Relative to Miranda's works, this particular existence, or "historical testimony" (Benjamin, 1968, p. 220), is that of post-revolutionary Nicaragua. Yet, this specific time and space is not static. It is and forever will be evolving just as Miranda's art and dream are rotations of previous artists' works, historical and contemporary events (for instance, colonization, dictatorship, revolution,

contra-war, globalization, and global free market trends), and personal experiences (childhood memories), which then all overlap in the process of rotation itself.

What I am suggesting, then, is that this post-revolutionary rotational dynamic is inherent in the notion of what Benjamin alludes to as translation. Essentially, translation is a process that facilitates an artwork's "afterlife;" a transitional "stage of continued life" by which an artwork transforms into something much more than its present self. Moreover, it is an auratic inevitability that an original work of art be translated because it actually "calls for" its translation in order to continue to live. Fittingly for post-revolutionary art, which are works that entail meta-processes of moving through and then beyond traumatic and oppressive conditions, an "original work must die to itself in order live beyond itself in another language" (Auslander, 2008, p. 62).

Thus, "the task of the translator," is not merely to reroute and reiterate information, but rather to negotiate "the unfathomable, the mysterious, the 'poetic,' something that a translator can reproduce only if he is also a poet" (Benjamin, 1968, p. 70). In other words, the task of the translator is one that is aimed at the *recreation* of an artwork to ultimately reveal its liberatory powers out of an imprisoning yet necessary language.

For the present layer, Miranda is the translator at hand. He first uses other artistic voices in order to articulate a manifest dream language (Layer I). He then uses a centuries old and world renowned art form—puppetry—to translate that dream language for diverse viewers to comprehend in their own ways. This latter step is precisely the focus of the remainder of Layer II—this is "Miranda in play."

In Layer II, I will utilize the metaphorical framework of puppetry to elucidate the symbolic meanings associated with each manifest thematic element presented in Layer I and to show how Miranda is primarily "playing with puppets." Overall, Play will be organized according to the following pentadic framework:

*Miranda in Play: Synopsis*

***Act~*** to manipulate puppets: lucidity and compensation

***Scene~*** canvas: palimpsest and unfinalizability

***Agent~*** Miranda as puppeteer: dialogism and double-vision

***Agency~*** puppets (Layer I pentadic items): distancing and transitional "objects"

***Purpose~*** to play: dream and day residues

*Act: To Manipulate Puppets*

Manipulating puppets is a first step towards understanding how Miranda is "playing." To that end, just as the purpose of Dream is to show and to be shown, to manipulate puppets is essentially the same task but from the point of the manipulator, or puppeteer—the puppeteer manipulates the puppets to show them. Likewise, since, according to Sinclair (1995), "Every puppet must have the potential for movement" (p. 12), by manipulating the figures of his paintings Miranda symbolically en-acts them.

Thus, this section will reveal the signified sides of Layer I acts—to suspend and float and to balance—and the place of puppetry in this process. Two terms are particularly important: *lucidity* and *compensation*.

***Lucidity~*** Lucidity, or lucid dreaming refers to a dreamer's awareness that s/he is dreaming (Green, 1968). During lucid dreams, it is often the case that the dreamer is able to consciously manipulate her/his own actions, other characters, objects, and settings.

Given these circumstances, I believe that this is precisely the state from which Miranda is enacting his creative visions for/through his paintings. In other words, by manipulating the puppet figures of his dreams, Miranda is inevitably manipulating the dream itself: he is a lucid dreamer. According to LaBerge (1985),

> Lucid dreaming can be conceptualized as the union of two [traditionally conceived] separate elements, dreaming and consciousness. Lucid dreaming can therefore be initiated in two general ways: either from the dream state, while the person is dreaming and consciousness is added; or *when the person is conscious and dreaming is added.* In the second case, the initial state is waking consciousness, while in the first case, the initial state is ordinary, non-lucid dreaming. (pp. 109-110; my emphasis)

Miranda is an example of the latter (italicized) case because he adds his dreams (hence our interview conversation) to his paintings. Interestingly enough, a very common characteristic of lucid dreaming is the attempt and practice of dreamers to float and fly in the air. Hunt argues that when lucidity is acutely developed, as is the case with Miranda's extraordinary technical skill and eye for metaphoric narrative (Lovo, 2007), it may imbue "strikingly spiritual or archetypal forms of dream content…[including] flying and floating,…geometric imagery, encounters with mythological [read in/animate hybrid] beings, and the white light or luminosity experiences described in classical mysticism—all with corresponding feelings of special portent and meaning" (1986, p. 271).

In essence, Miranda is a lucid dreamer because he is able to master puppet dream elements, including the "psychedelic" (Hunt & Ogilvie, 1988) acts of floating and flying, which he systematically adds to his waking-life artwork. The next step, then, is to

determine what may function to facilitate balance and control between "dream content" (e.g. floating manifestations) and "portent and meaning."

***Compensation~*** In a similar sense that lucidity may capture the latencies of suspending and floating entities, compensation is an important concept for understanding why Miranda overtly balances these two acts and the puppets that perform them. Compensation is a term coined by analytic psychology founder Carl Jung (1966) to refer to the self-regulatory dynamics between the unconscious and the conscious whereby if a disturbance transpires each may function to correct the imbalance; the unconscious and the conscious "complement one another to form a totality, which is the *self*" (p. 177; emphasis in the original). For instance, Rex Furness, who is a blind writer, talks about how he "sees" in his dreams:

> I was in my old college laboratory when I saw a young lady, unfortunately blind, so I thought, in obvious difficulties as regards her whereabouts. I immediately went to help her, and led her through the intricacies of the passages, but all the time I knew I was blind, and could think how strange it was that I could act as escort… (as cited in Blank, 1958, p. 168)

Given the "cultural trauma"—a process that Alexander (2004) asserts "occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (p. 1)—that Nicaragua has repeatedly undergone, perhaps Miranda's dream-brought-to-waking-conscious paintings function as compensatory acts to alleviate those hard-lived and historically-situated experiences of the world outside. For example, *Ofrenda* (Figure 22)

may capture the compensatory acts of Nicaraguans, especially Nicaraguan women (encoded via the floating *granadilla*), in negotiating the "gravitational pull" of the Catholic church (pope) in asserting control over women's bodies through influence of state policy like that of the abortion law. In his dream, Miranda is able to "control the controlling" through placing the *granadilla*, the thematic symbol of his paintings to represent Nicaragua and Nicaraguans in particular ways, in a liberatory and transcendental position above the rigid stance of the pope and surrounding crumbling pillars, which are symbolic of the unyielding yet deconstructable structures of religious and state bodies.

Overall, in manipulating the puppets of his dreams and thus the dream itself, Miranda establishes himself as a lucid dreamer. Moreover, by having puppet agents engage in lucidity-typical acts, such as floating, he is able to symbolically represent a compensatory dynamic between those free floating figures, which may stand in for traditionally oppressed peoples, and debilitating structural conditions of the lived world. The next section of scene will address the notion of "group consciousness and memory" in extending and adapting lucidity and compensation for understanding Miranda's role in helping to create Nicaragua's "future identity" (Alexander, 2004).

*Scene: Canvas*

A second dimension in understanding how Miranda is playing is to consider the play place, or puppet show stage itself: the painting canvases. These canvases are much more than blank sheets of stretched and primed cloth; rather, they are houses of multiple layers that collectively stand for and help create a deeper meaning. In this light, puppet and canvas are one in the same—both are sites of signification where life may be made

meaning-full (Tillis, 2001)—and together create a scene that may be manipulated by Miranda to re-imagine a different kind of cultural landscape.

This section will be revealing the latent sides of Layer I scenes—layered environments and hyperopic perspectives—and the place of puppetry in this process. Two terms stand out as particularly pertinent: *palimpsest* and *unfinalizability*.

***Palimpsest~*** Literally speaking, a palimpsest is a type of reusable writing surface, usually of parchment or papyrus material, where earlier writing is still legible beneath the most recent. A palimpsest is a forerunner of modern writing materials, which was commonly used in the West until the introduction of paper in the late 1400s to early 1500s (Gaur, 1984).

In a metaphorical sense, intellectuals have used the notion of palimpsest to explain the powerful ability of the human mind to re-member and re-assemble experiences—personal life and historically passed down—that help to inform and create one's present self. For instance, English writer Thomas de Quincey (1821/2003) speaks of the brain-as-inter-text in his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater and Other Writings*:

> What else than a natural and mighty palimpsest is the human brain? Such a palimpsest is my brain; such a palimpsest, O reader! is yours. Everlasting layers of ideas, images, feelings, have fallen upon your brain softly as light. Each succession has seemed to bury all that went before. And yet in reality not one has been extinguished. (p. 150)

Given this context, I believe that Miranda's paintings are palimpsestic surfaces that foreground oneiric mappings of historically and symbolically embedded events. By

frequently and intensely featuring scenic manifestations that display layers of sky, water, land, clouds, time (time of day and weather conditions), and characters and objects themselves, Miranda buttresses a symbolic guide of personal and cultural memories (Alexander, 2004) and palimpsestically encodes them for creating a present and future individual-collective identity.

To illustrate, in *Granadilla en Alta Mar* (Figure 11) Miranda utilizes layered images of restless seas and skies in combination with a childhood toy—a *trompo* (which is itself a very restless, movement hectic device) —attached to a *granadilla* ship to capture what Serres and Latour (1995) identify as the spastic nature of life itself: "Time doesn't flow; it percolates" (p. 62). In other words, by placing a childhood spinning top toy in relation to the torrential waves, it is as if Miranda is saying, "Where does time fly? At one moment I am blithely playing with my toys back home in San Carlos and the next I being threatened by the unforgiving currents that pelt my country—war, invasion, obscene politics." Yet, he adds another layer in this painting; the *granadilla* acts as a ship, a latent sign to signify Nicaragua's capacity to take personal (childhood memories) and collective (revolutionary art) memories, artistic/playful (*trompo*) and combative (waves), and "travel" with and through them to "new lands"—innovative and interstitial spaces of the future.

In summary, Miranda positions his canvases as "puppetic" scenes that may be manipulated to symbolize his own oneiric layers of personal and cultural testimonies. Canvases become representative palimpsests of "everlasting layers" of Miranda's "ideas, images, [and] feelings," which are informed but not defined by a history of trauma.

***Unfinalizability~*** While palimpsests help to articulate the latent meanings of the layered manifestations of Miranda's paintings, the notion of unfinalizability may help to explain the signified persona of hyperopic perspectives. Unfinalizability is a term coined by radical Russian literary critic and semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) to explain how nothing in life has come to any final conclusion:

> Nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future. (p. 166)

I believe that Miranda's underlying meaning of farsightedly positioned scenes is rooted in Bakhtin's unfinalizability because in so doing he visualizes what he expresses in our conversation relative to how an artist immortalizes the moment in which s/he paints and thus is inevitably destined to share it with persons of the present and future (see the Miranda epigraph in Chapter 1). Miranda's artwork overlaps Bakhtin's views since in essence he literally and figuratively strives to "look at the bigger picture;" no final painting (word) of and about the moment in which an artist lives has come to pass; rather artists themselves become cultural palimpsests and sites of signification onto which future artists may continue to build.

As an example, *Los Amentes* (Figure 23) very much captures an "in the moment" emotion that consubstantially (Burke, 1969a) has been passed down throughout the ages across cultures: passion. Miranda constructs a longshot view of a couple embracing one another, manipulating the scene in such a way as to express the paradoxical nature of that embrace. On one hand, a passionate *moment* is an effervescence of being, an "exhilaration of the ensemble and the evaporation of the individual" (Roach, 2007, p. 18).

On the other hand, passion is an everlasting state that has endured throughout time. Thus, in engaging with a hyperopic perspective signifier, Miranda is able to magnetize an unfinalizable signified to create a powerful message: love is enduring (even when times are at their bleakest).

In establishing a scene of canvas as puppet, Miranda is able to convey palimpsestic and unfinalizable significations of life—everlasting effervescence of being. In the words of Irish poet and dramatist William Butler Yeats (1961),

> I believe in three doctrines…: (1) That the borders of our mind are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy. (2) That the borders of our memories are as shifting, and that our memories are a part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself. (3) That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols. (p. 28)

Likewise, by having puppet scenes stand in as symbols of palimpsest and unfinalizability, Miranda is able to represent a layered and farsighted dynamic of self and cultural collective experience. Agent, the following section, will further be highlighting the shifting and collaborative "nature of memory" and "memory of nature" in terms of Miranda's position as puppeteer in negotiating multiple voices that may help to make up those symbols that evoke a "great mind and great memory."

*Agent: Miranda as Puppeteer*

A third important step in understanding how Miranda is playing is to consider his role as puppeteer. Miranda's task is crucial because it involves critically negotiating major agents—inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid—and their movements and

placements so that they may come to life. Likewise, the inverse may also be true: puppets themselves are "second beings" that communicate with the puppeteer through movement. Ironically, just as Miranda brings life to the puppets, they, too, bring life and transformation to him (Schechner, 2006).

The present section will be illuminating the signified dimensions of Layer I agents and the place of puppetry in this process. Two concepts are especially relevant: *dialogism* and *double-vision*.

***Dialogism~*** In a similar sense that palimpsest metaphorically captures the layered nature of "ideas, images, [and] feelings" (de Quincey, 1823, p. 144) and unfinalizability, the never-ending and regenerative characteristics of life, dialogism is a term that "agenticizes" those theories by focusing on the multiplicity of voices that an artist/puppeteer must consider when developing a work of art. Dialogism is another concept devised by Bakhtin (1984) to explain how discourses are intersections of sundry perspectives. Dialogism, in essence, is a "heteroglossic" space made up of permutations of historical and contemporary standpoints and a site of a "plurality of consciousnesses" that entails contradiction and struggle.

This concept is particularly important from the viewpoint of an artist because the artist's "function is that of a ringmaster [read puppet master] who deploys various voices without identifying fully with any of them…[and] without subordinating them to any one voice" (Auslander, 2008, p. 41). Miranda considers an eclectic array of characters ranging from inanimate agents, like *granadillas* and paper objects, to animate agents such as butterflies and babies, and in-between, context-particular figures who/that amalgamate

the extremes. As puppet master, he deploys familiar and unfamiliar voices to unite them not to form a system, but rather a "dynamic event" (Auslander, 2008, p. 41).

As encoded through violinists (Figures 6 and 21) and violins (Figures 10, 19, and 26), one example voice that Miranda consistently portrays is that of the late great Italian *luthier* [crafter of string instruments] Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737). On a more practical note, the Stradivari make of string instruments has endured throughout the ages and is renowned across the globe for their impeccable tone and high quality of craftsmanship. In fact, Stradivari instruments are iconic in the music world, often referred to as "Stradivariuses" and even colloquially as "Strads." Famous French-American cellist Yo-Yo Ma, distinguished Israeli-American violinist Itzhak Perlman, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra are just a few of the more contemporary figures who use Stradivari instruments (Faber, 2004).

Further, within the paintings Miranda positions the Stradivari voice in very key locations: wherever there is a *granadilla* there is a Stradivarius. For instance, in *Granadilla Stradivarius* (Figure 26) not only is a violin floating directly between a large suspended *granadilla*, which is cut in half, and a small basket containing two *granadillas*, but the *granadilla* itself becomes a Stradivarius because of its mimicking shape.

Miranda clusters these two agents/agencies for a specific purpose. In so doing, he takes a very individualized (Western) conception of virtuosity, as directly encoded through Stradivari himself and indirectly through other virtuosos who play his instruments, and applies it to describe and inform a collective cultural identity of Nicaragua. To that end, Miranda is essentially saying, "Nicaragua is a nation of virtuosos. Through our collective artistic talents, we hold and constitute a very special,

although not entirely separate, place in the world. With our extraordinary abilities we can create beauty that flourishes in our country and resonates in a world without."[59]

In general, Miranda's dialogical employment of a variety of voices, such as that of virtuoso artisan Antonio Stradivari, may help to facilitate a creation of a particular individual-collective identity of Nicaragua. Moreover, in mixing animate voices (e.g. Stradivari's and Nicaraguans') that are encoded through inanimate objects (e.g. violins and *granadillas*), Miranda promotes their intimate transitive and intransitive relationships therein. Rather fittingly, Israeli violinist Gitlis (2000) propounds:

> I have a violin that was born in 1713. It was alive long before me, and I hope it lives long after me. I don't consider it as my violin. Rather, I am perhaps its violinist; I am passing through its life.

As puppeteer, Miranda engages with the double notion that by endowing puppets with multiple voices he brings life to them and they in turn to his. The next section will further elaborate herein.

***Double-Vision~*** Double vision, as alluded to in the introduction of Layer II, is a puppet's essence: "a profound and illuminating paradox provoked by an 'object' with 'life'" (Tillis, 1992, p. 65). Correspondingly, Sandoval's (2000) interpretation of Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, will help to further promote an understanding of this concept. She explains,

> The title of Fanon's 1951 work, *Black Skin, White Masks*, calls up an unsettling mode of perception, for the title disrupts the racial binary hierarchy between "black and "white" by unifying these racial categories into a single body, a

[59] This statement connects particularly well with one proposed by Craven in our conversation. He states, "Nicaragua is, in per capita terms, one of the most important countries in the history of the world in terms of number of poets" (personal communication, January 17, 2008).

> racially cyborg body, part technology (mask), part biology (skin). But it also does something else, something more challenging. In considering this body of skin and mask, one experiences a kind of vertigo: if the skin is black, but the face one views, or wears, is only a disguise of white power—"black skin, white masks"—then physical, psychic, and cultural environs become unstable meanings…A metaphor such as this operates through what is known as a "chiasmic" change of signification, a twisted trope that makes meaning by turning it on itself, by repeating while simultaneously inverting the relationship between two concepts. (p. 84)

While double-vision is inevitably a part of the contradictory yet inseparable "life-bond" between puppeteer and puppet, Miranda further enhances this dialectic through, as Sandoval puts it, a "chiasmic" cross-section of intransitive and transitive traits of agents. For instance, in *Justicia: Azar y Precipicio* (Figure 9), Miranda places the *maquila* worker and *caudillo* in seemingly direct opposition to each other, with the *maquila* worker balancing black ("evil") and white ("good") balls, the sky ("transcendence") and barren landscape ("damnation"), and precipice as dividing line to further enhance this surface binary. However, like Fanon, Miranda takes the painting's signification a step further.

In addition to switching the cultural standpoints (as encoded through switching their physical locations in the painting) between the two figures—the *maquila* worker is no longer one who is "down and out" and the *caudillo* is no longer one who imposes from above—which still attends to a dichotomous setup, Miranda then moves on to infuse them. First, he has the *maquila* worker emerging *from* the precipice below;

suggesting, then, that where one "comes from" and where one is "now" (subordination/domination) are one in the same (or, as Pearl Jam lead vocalist Eddie Vedder (1993) sings in "Daughter," "She holds the hand that holds her down—she will…rise above").

Meanwhile, literally speaking the two figures corporeally complete each other: where the *maquila* worker has no lower extremities and the *caudillo* no upper ones, each synecdochically stands in to "fill in the gaps." Thus, in a signified sense, Miranda swirls the two "sides" together to articulate a process of symbolic surrogation: the traumatic, obscene, and "uncompensatory" state conjured up in the process of "playing puppet" as survival under a sexually exploitive (objectifying free market) system substituted for this same venue that may also enable a strategic exposure of an interstitial space inhabiting player as played and played as player and thus a crucial point at which to create an inter-place of "new" (translated) beginnings.

In further deploying a notion of double-vision, Miranda chiasmically interchanges his own position as puppeteer to that of puppet. In *La Creación del Arte* (Figure 1), he twists and turns the traditionally conceived puppeteer-puppet binary in on itself, working through it and yet also moving beyond to deliver another "meta-ideological" (Sandoval, 2000) message. Like Fanon's "cyborg body," Miranda's own physical characteristics become bio-techno-infusions: floating mask-face, mechanical-flesh extremities (his right forearm is a prosthesis), all wrapped up in a lucid dream-waking residual bed sheet (his bed cover is an artifact leftover from a waking memory just before his head hit the

pillow, which then becomes part of the dream itself and again encoded through a waking venue of painting).[60]

Through his twisted corporeality, Miranda is able to articulate how a human-puppet chiasm is a part of his, and by metonymic association our, everyday waking-dreaming lives. He visually explains how he/we are at once caught between everyday performances of forged social roles (including his role as a Nicaraguan painter) and structural conditions (e.g. economic, racial, sexual) and yet have the power to use those roles and conditions (which are, to a great degree, reinscribed creations of our own making) to add a "new" palimpsestic layer to an ongoing (unfinalizable), churning cultural/life transformation process—this is "the creation of art."

Overall, Miranda's role as puppeteer is a critical one. All at once, he dialogically "plays" with multiple voices and negotiates those standpoints in relation to his own to create a double-visional space. In that space lays an interstitial possibility to lucidly and compensationally construct a new layer onto a "great memory" of the world. This next section will be exploring those agencies that facilitate these dynamics.

*Agency: Puppets (All Layer I Pentadic Elements)*

Deciphering the role of Miranda's puppets themselves is a fourth dimension of interpreting Miranda in play. While Miranda's role as agent puppeteer intimately entails those double-vision "life-transforming forces" (Schechner, 2006) that puppets co-create with him, this section is devoted to explaining how puppets become such life-force vessels. To that end, puppets have a double-translatory role: they are translatory tools by which to make accessible Miranda's dream-art language and they are translated lives themselves.

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[60] These notions of day and dream residue will be further addressed in the Layer II "Purpose" section.

Accordingly, this section will be addressing the signified sides of Layer I agencies—containers and tools of transition (point-to-point and open-ended)—and the place of puppetry in this process. Two terms are particularly applicable: *distancing* and *transitional "objects."*

***Distancing~*** A very important concept in understanding how puppets may become life-force vessels in Miranda's dream art is that of distancing. Distancing, in fact, is a particular creative art therapy method by which puppets are used for traumatic healing processes, especially for those of children. According to Frey (2006),

> The goal of puppetry for traumatized clients is to help them reach to a normalization of daily life, reactions, and symptoms. Talking through puppets allows children to express their thoughts and feelings by a "distancing" method. Since these clients are often resistant to discussing the trauma, as in the case of sexual abuse, puppetry can be an effective treatment modality. Some trauma victims, such as those experiencing loss by death, are in denial and are not able to benefit by traditional "talk therapies." (p. 181)

Given Miranda's utilization of lucid dream and compensation significations, palimpsest and unfinalizable latencies, and dialogical and double-vision symbolizations, I believe that distancing is absolutely one method by which Miranda's puppets may become healing tools from personal and cultural trauma. First of all, Miranda himself said that his "childhood has deeply impacted his painting" (personal communication, July 23, 2007); as such, it is as if he vicariously is re-living (i.e. re-framing) his child-self through his artwork of the present and especially through this child-specific, puppet-facilitating healing method of distancing. Miranda was born in 1972, a pivotal year of the

revolution, and he served in the Contra war when he was a teenager. In other words, his youth has been immersed in personal and collective experiences of violence. Thus, it seems that Miranda post-traumatically has turned to surrealist-based renderings of puppets in order to emerge out of these maligned specters.

Furthermore, his manipulation of agency-specific items, like that of containers, promotes a unique place in which to latently ground a concept of distancing. Containers and distancing are oxymoronically intertwined: in containing (obsessively holding on to) traumatic memories, distancing may help a person to "let go" of those specters. Moreover, in using unfamiliar, yet symbolically laden, types of containers like *granadillas*, babies, and skies, Miranda is able to apply a notion of distancing to Nicaragua, to the future, and to creating environment, respectively. Frey contends:

> Traumatized clients seldom arrive in therapy able to discuss uncomfortable feelings about themselves in the "here and now." It becomes the therapist's responsibility to meet trauma clients at their level of readiness and move them, through modeling, across the four continua [others – self, there and then – here and now, thoughts – feelings, and comfortable feelings – uncomfortable feelings]. Puppetry is very effective in this process. (p. 183)

Not only is puppetry effective in this process, I would argue that the puppet *becomes* the therapist. In Miranda's paintings puppets become therapists because each container-symbol itself dialogically encompasses voices propelled by traumatic experiences—e.g. *granadilla* = Nicaragua (which contains colonization and war, for instance), babies = future (which contains inheritance of globalization and free market exploitation, for example), and skies = environment (which contains natural disasters like earthquakes and

hurricanes and man-made disasters like poverty and racism, to illustrate)—*and* synchronically constitutes those very distancing tools and translated lives that are necessary for moving from the "there and then," i.e. those traumatic experiences, to a "here and now," i.e. a present moment of hope and possibility.

What transpires, then, is a puppet-inspired "chiasmic change of signification" (Sandoval, 2000, p. 84) and what Burke (1969a) would "coach" as a "synecdochic reversal" because it, "like a road, extends in either direction" (p. 509): letting go = holding on, wound = healing. In general, Miranda uses puppetry (i.e. "plays with puppets") as a means by which not only to expose personal and cultural traumatic memories, but also to use those very memories in order to transition from, as Frey puts it, "symbolic play to 'talk therapy'" (p. 183). Precisely the place at which the next set of instrumental latencies may come in to play.

***Transitional "Objects"~*** A second crucial term in understanding how puppets may become life-transformational vessels in Miranda's dream art is that of transitional "objects." The notion of transitional "objects" is a concept conceived by psychoanalyst and pediatrician D. W. Winnicott (1971) to explain those instruments that facilitate human development in gradually taking the place of the mother-child bond. At birth, an infant is not able to distinguish between "me" and "not me." Thus, the mother's breasts serve as her/his first transitional phenomena. Essentially, these transitional "objects" help to create a liminal, or "potential space" that constitutes both baby and mother and eases the child's growth in understanding that s/he is a separate being. However, not too long after birth the baby begins to discover and invent other transitional items: a thumb, a pacifier, an ear of a stuffed rabbit, "a security blanket," etc. As a person continues to

develop into their adolescence and adulthood, literal objects are no longer necessarily needed to cultivate life transitions; instead, more abstract and symbolic tools are sought after.

Quite frankly, then, puppets may function as both physical transitional objects and symbolic ones. In a traditional sense of distancing, children play with puppets in order to transition to the next stages of their lives after having been disrupted by traumatic experiences. In a symbolic extension and adaptation of the word, Miranda "plays" with puppets in order to transition from the creation of a personal standpoint to that of contributing to the making of a cultural identity and healing. For instance, in incorporating literal images of tools of transition like that of the color red (an open-ended tool of transition), Miranda is able to encode a symbolic meaning of healing in general and of Nicaragua's healing in particular. Red is a powerful color in dream, archetypically appearing in a variety of forms to stand in for such processes as recovery. As Reis and Snow (2000) indicate:

> The dream realms concerned with the childhood trauma and the archetypal dream figure, RED [a red female character who repeatedly appears in the second author's dreams], took us through all the stages of abuse recovery. We became students of this dream realm as it showed us precisely where we needed to place our attention. The need for the truth to be known, to be spoken and believed, the need for witnesses, the desire for revenge on the abuser, the sadness and grief over the loss of childhood innocence, the regaining of female power—all of these came through at this dreaming level, bringing us the necessary awareness, giving

> us the keys, the way into the story and through it to the threshold of recovery. (p. 14)

Even more powerful, Miranda amalgamates tools of transition for a "double signification" therein. In *Ofrenda*, for instance, he blends red (open-ended) and stairs (point-to-point) to form a red carpet staircase hovering directly in between the pope and *granadilla*. This staircase symbolically becomes a compensational chiasm creating a "potential space" where each figure—Nicaragua/ns (*granadilla*) and pope (Catholic religious bodies)—mutually makes an "offering" of themselves to the other.

A second epitomic example of this "double signification" appears in *Niño* (Figure 20). At first sight, Miranda portrays a conventional usage of transitional "objects," since the dangling bright red present, to a great degree, becomes such a tool for the floating baby. Yet, since Miranda is the puppeteer, both baby and present become his puppets, and by extension his transitional "objects." This is a rather significant connection. In essence, Miranda visually is conveying that his own real-life, flesh-and-blood children (he is the father of two young boys) are those transitional tools that have helped him move on from his own traumatic past. Not only this, but since children, his included, "contain" the future, Miranda also is saying that they are those transitional "objects" who may help Nicaragua to heal. To that end, he synchronically communicates that it is thus our responsibility to ensure that children are "delivered" the "life-force" type of tools that they need in order to grow into the kind of individuals who can engender such growth and transformation.

Distancing and transitional "objects" are two critical terms for understanding how Miranda's puppets may become symbolic tools of transformation. Miranda plays with

puppets through a distancing approach in order to create a personal-cultural healing: "In order to heal the wound, we first have to open it" (Raven as cited in Gómez-Peña, 1994, p. 19). Likewise, Miranda symbolically "shapes" his puppets into transitional "objects" to expedite that process. The final section will delve into an understanding of the dynamics of playing and Miranda's purpose for doing it therein.

*Purpose: To Play*

Up to this point I have purposefully avoided discussing the concept of playing itself, choosing instead to focus on those latencies of act, scene, agent, and agency that contribute to developing this overarching purpose. Playing is pivotal to the Miranda dream drama because it may help to explain the circumscribing reasons as to why Miranda features surrealist images and why he uses puppetry as a channel to translate those images. Henceforth, this section is dedicated towards facilitating an understanding of the role of playing in Miranda's paintings. First, I will set forth a brief conceptual framework of *playing* and, second, explain the roles of *dream and day residues* in that process.

***Playing~*** According to Schechner (2006), playing is a fundamental dimension of performance: "restored behavior [the "anatomy" of performance] is playful; it has a quality of not being entirely 'real' or 'serious'" (p. 89). In this sense, playing is a composition of several overlapping interstitial spaces that promiscuously and fluidly move in multiple directions at once. In other words, playing is a gossamer version of Burke's (1966) terministic screen notion of language and reality, a web of interwoven realities that light-heartedly intermix with other (e.g. ritual) realms of life. What is key about playing is that it intrinsically embodies make-believe performances and is a

collection of rhetorical acts because special signals, or meta-messages are incorporated to let communicators know that "this is play" (Schechner, 2006). All in all, then, playing entails those expressions of "what if" that straddle a fine line between "pretend" and "actuality."

In Winnicott's (1971) sense of the term, playing is an origin of human culture stemming from that "potential space," or experience of trust that is developed between mother and child. This playing-is-cultural-origin theory may be summarized according to the following cycle: (1) Transitional objects facilitate a construction of a perception of trust (safe/potential space). For example, a mother's breasts blur those lines between mother and baby in the world and thus help baby feel "whole." (2) This safe space, in turn, transforms into more recognizable and creative playing as a child grows. For instance, a child climbs trees to build/find her own safe spaces. (3) Playing then becomes inscribed through more symbolic channels, such as dating, in seeking trust across a variety of social terrains. (4) Finally, satisfying experiences of playing become a basis for cultural practices such as art and religion.[61]

Playing is an in-between place that enables our minds to negotiate the "what ifs" of life. It is also a fundamentality of culture itself. To that end, since dreaming is a type of "interior playing" (Schechner, 2006), Winnicott's psychoanalytic theory has great potential for promoting understanding of Miranda's play in lucidly applying unconscious workings through coats of oil paint to canvas. The following concepts will further shed

[61] I would also argue that if this cycle were to be disrupted in some traumatic way, for instance a child is sexually abused or an individual experiences the psychic-cultural violence of war, to "deal with" such circumstances a person's play may become dis-located to find trust and safety in parallel destructive spaces such as excessive use of drugs or obsessive compulsive activities such as anorexia nervosa. Moreover, such dissociate playing could then facilitate a basis for oppressive cultural practices…as the cycle continues.

light on this process especially in realizing a transition from Miranda's standpoint to that of audience's.

***Dream and Day Residues*~** Winnicott's perspective on playing, culture, and reality is a key stepping stone for understanding a dream/day residual cycle in relation to Miranda's surrealist art. An understanding of Winnicott's theory in relation to dream and day residues may help to reveal overall why Miranda uses puppetry as a form of playing to translate his language of dream (i.e. why he "manipulates puppets").

Watkins (1976/1984) defines dream residue as persistence of dream into one's waking day routine. Dream residue is an inverse of Freud's (1900/1953) day residue, which refers to "the event of the previous day which set it [a dream] in motion" (p. 165). Like Winnicott's cycle, dream and day residues are intimately connected in their own cyclical internal playing pattern. In Watkins's words:

> [T]he concrete events [of the day] are as likely to reflect the imaginal movement [of a dream] as the other way around…As he goes through the day the dreamer could note the "residue of the dream" in his dayworld…[T]he relating of the day and the dream world…circles back and forth, never getting far from the experience of the imaginal. (p. 130)

To that end, since both dreaming and playing are one in the same, then dreaming, like playing, may be a basis for human culture. In light of Watkins dream and day residual paradigm, its antithesis may also be true: culture is a basis for dreaming. Playing/dreaming to culture, culture to playing/dreaming, which ever way the wheel revolves, all terms are interlocked in an alchemic dynamic that informs and creates a meaning of/for life itself.

Given the lucid significations that Miranda incorporates into his paintings, I am suggesting that the artist engages with a dream and day residual cycle to powerfully, albeit slowly, instill a *particular message* of hope (personal communication, July 23, 2007) and transformation (puppetry as translatory and life-force medium) into the minds of diverse viewers. The cycle may look something like this: (1) Miranda lucidly incorporates recollections of his dreams into his waking life paintings. Put differently, those artworks manifest his dreams, thus becoming dream residues of the waking world. (2) These dream residues may then become the day residues of viewers (3) who may, in turn, incorporate those day residues into their dreams, (4) which ultimately may facilitate a gradual imaginative change of one's cultural surroundings, leading back to the "beginning."

Ultimately what this means is that Miranda plays make-believe in order to make belief, in order to transform those "what ifs" into lived realities. This process goes beyond imagining oneself flying; it is a percolative regeneration of a vision, a dream if you will, for a future that holds liberatory potential rather than absolute oppression. That is why Miranda is playing.

## Chapter Summary

In the present chapter, I have addressed two key pentadic paradigms of the Miranda painting aggregate: "surrealism in manifest" and "Miranda in play." Each pentadic framework falls on a graduated literal-to-latent layer continuum in the investigatory process. For Layer I, figures are suspended and float and are balanced in layered environments from hyperopic vantage points; these figures prove to be tools of transition and containers that point to inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid agents'

purpose to show and to be shown. For Layer II, Miranda himself becomes a key agent—a puppeteer—in manipulating puppets on a canvas scene in order to play.

In the first layer, Dream, I have found that *act* is a crucial characteristic of Miranda's paintings in creating a surreal environment. Through suspension, flotation, and balance, figures visually encode a dream drama where they are able to freely move about the setting without conventions of gravitational restrictions.

*Scene* is also important in this first level because such literal elements as sky-water, sky-land, and sky-cloud-time characteristics help to capture the overarching layered essence of the painting collective. Moreover, a notion of hyperopic perspectives is paramount because if it were not for this farsighted state of setting, the other scenic qualities of layered environments would be difficult, and even impossible to discern.

I have found that *agent* is a necessary element for manifesting the aggregate dream narrative. Inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid characters intransitively and transitively inhabit the setting to pivotally facilitate a distinction of a clearly surreal aura.

*Agency* is a necessary pentadic element. I have found that tools of transition, including those of point-to-point and open-ended characteristic, and containers promote the suspension, flotation, and balance of inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid agents. Whereas tools of transition embody a medium that assists movement, passage, and/or change from one place, state, or entity to another, containers are a complementation that facilitates capacity to hold and/or carry materials.

Finally, I have found *purpose* to be key in surrealism in manifest because it helps in understanding why agents act as they do, with what tools, and under what kinds of conditions. Agents engage in eye-popping acts, with conventional unconventionally used

instruments, within breath-taking backdrops to show themselves and to be shown by someone.

In Play, the second pentadic layer, that someone is Miranda himself. Through a metaphorical medium of puppetry, Miranda translates his dreams into a "readable" language for diverse viewers. In essence, his task is one aimed at recreating a surrealist voice to ultimately reveal its liberatory powers. Puppetry is a powerful translatory tool because it at once is a "pentadic life"—it is act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose all rolled up into one—and a complex "second being" that is colloquially stigmatized while globally revered as a "liberating performance art" (Currell, 1992, p. 6).

Using puppetry as a metaphorical framework, Layer II identifies how Miranda is playing. I have found that *act* is a crucial element because it pinpoints how Miranda manipulates puppets in lucid and compensational ways. Miranda is a lucid dreamer because he is able to master puppet dream elements and apply them to his waking life artwork. Likewise, he signifies a compensatory dynamic between free-floating figures to have them stand in for balance between marginalized voices and marginalizing structures.

*Scene* is vital because it helps to highlight how Miranda's collective painting canvas may function as a palimpsestic and unfinalizable entity. I have found that he uses his canvas to "talk about" his own life layers of personal and cultural testimonies, which are informed but not defined by a history of trauma. Moreover, through using hyperopic scenic shots Miranda encodes unfinalizable messages such as those of enduring love and hope.

I have found *agent* to be a particularly powerful element, after all, it is Miranda himself! As puppeteer, Miranda dialogically employs a variety of cross-cultural voices to

help facilitate the building of a particular individual-collectively infused identity of Nicaragua. Further, in intermixing contradictory voices with unconventional objects he creates a chiasmic and double-visional space not for solely considering the "black" or the "white," but for engaging with paradoxes to create possibility.

*Agency* is an especially dynamic element because it considers how puppets themselves are healing and transitional lives. Through the creative method of distancing, puppets help not only to expose personal and cultural traumatic memories, but also to use those very memories to grow. Paradoxically, distancing enables a survivor to "get closer" to healing. In a similar light, puppets are also transitional objects that may catalyze those "growth movements" in a distancing process; they are the tools that help a survivor actually "go the distance."

Last, I have found *purpose* to be an integral part of Layer II because it may work to bring to consciousness why Miranda uses puppetry as a form of playing to translate his language of dream (i.e. why he "manipulates puppets"). In general, playing is a vital part of humanity because it enables people to engage with the "what ifs" of life. It is also a fundamentality of culture itself. To that end, dreaming is internal playing and thus also holds a key role in cultural development. Ultimately, then, Miranda's paintings become dream residues so that viewers may incorporate them into their waking life experiences, which then transform into day residues of their dreams, to facilitate a percolative process of psychologically and physically re-imagining one's environment.

Miranda's paintings and concomitant utilization of a puppetry motif engender a dream and day residual cycle to powerfully, albeit slowly, instill a particular message of

hope and transformation. The next chapter will explore exactly what that message is and its implications for viewers.

# CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

*And in the world a dream-traffic has been unleashed*
*that the traffickers in death cannot stop;*
*and everywhere there are packages with big bows*
*that only this new race of people [the dream bearers] can see,*
*and the seed of these dreams cannot be detected*
*because it is enclosed in red hearts*
*or in ample maternity dresses*
*where tiny feet of dreamers teem inside the wombs that bear them.*

*It is said that earth, after giving birth to them,*
*unchained a rainbow in the sky*
*and blew the breath of fertility on the roots of trees.*

*All we know is that we have seen them*
*We know that life engendered them*
*as protection against the prophecies of death.*

~Gioconda Belli, Nicaraguan poet and novelist (1989, pp. 101, 103)

For this final chapter, I will consider the broader implications of my findings and analysis of Layer I and Layer II pentadic elements. To that end, I will answer my research questions, discussing a third pentadic paradigm relative to an audience standpoint in the process, reflect upon the role of a rhetorical critic, and make suggestions for future research.

## Research Questions Revisited

A culmination of my thesis requires a reflection upon the very questions that propelled this study and how they have informed my findings and analysis:

(1) What kinds of rhetorical strategies are suggested by the role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua?

(2) How might surrealism function to mediate these strategies in order to communicate a new kind of world?

*Rhetorical Strategies*

In this section I will address the first research question by considering the literal and latent features of Layer I and Layer II as an aggregate. In doing so, I will also provide synopses of the two pentads' key elements as identified in Chapter 4. Given how Play necessarily builds upon Dream, I will identify and discuss those *strategic points* that arise out of a cross-section of Layer I and Layer II one pentadic term at a time and how they ultimately engender a third new layer—Lived World.

***Act~*** The first strategic point that arises out of Dream's manifestations of suspension and flotation and balance and Play's latencies of lucidity and compensation is an act of choice. *To choose* is a major chord that is played throughout and across an act aggregate because it may be located in literal elements such as Dream agents' freedom in soaring in the air and Miranda's decisions to "manipulate puppets" in lucidly adding his dreams to his waking life practices. Moreover, choice stems from a manifestation of balance since it is rooted in negotiating two or more possibilities and from a signification of compensation because it is derived from engaging with two or more forces that function to regulate those dynamics between conscious and unconscious and cultural trauma and psychological healing.

***Scene~*** The second strategic point that arises out of an aggregate of Dream's literal elements of layered environments and hyperopic perspectives and Play's symbolic workings of palimpsest and unfinalizability is a scene of one's own inner landscape or life. *One's own life* is a major thread that is run throughout and across a scene aggregate because, as de Quincey expresses, our brains are comprised of "everlasting layers of ideas, images, [and] feelings" (1821/2003, p. 150). Similarly, our lives as human beings

are oxymoronically, finitely infinite entities. One's life is unfinalizable, in a Bakhtinian (1984) sense of the word, since, literally speaking, our bodies wear out and die, contributing to the physical layers of the environment, while also surviving in a new life form, in a "great mind and great memory" (Yeats, 1961, p. 28) of Nature.

***Agent~*** Arising out of an aggregate of Dream's literal elements of inanimate, animate, and in/animate hybrid agents and Play's significations of dialogism and double-vision is that of a third strategic point of you as a person in the world. *You as a person in the world* is a major key that reverberates throughout and across an agent collective because people are encoded as complex beings. Contrary to the dichotomous socially imposed boxes in which we often may find others trying to put us and even in which we may try to fit, a life is a work of art and an "inner world" comprised all at once of multiple voices and consciousnesses that entail contradiction and struggle. One's life is a translatory terrain necessitating a "death to itself"—going through traumatic experiences and negotiating those wounds' residues in a present state—in order to be able to "tap into" one's healing reservoir within so that that source may flourish in making a new world without.

***Agency~*** A fourth strategic point that stems from a collective of Dream's manifestations of tools of transition and containers and Play's latencies of distancing and transitional "objects" is an agency of resources one has on hand. *Resources one has on hand* is a crucial step in extending throughout and across an agency aggregate since it involves chiasmically using structural elements in innovative ways to heal from trauma, including those very elements that may have engendered the trauma in the first place. Metaphorically speaking, it involves fashioning kites out of stormy skies (Figure 18), and

in so doing revealing the possibility behind the clouds. These kinds of tools may facilitate moving from a "there and then" to a "here and now" (Frey, 2006) and may shed light upon how a person may re-use and re-signify maligned specters to create a new understanding of healing through and yet beyond those haunting memories.

***Purpose~*** The final strategic point that surfaces from an aggregate of Dream's literal collections of to show and to be shown and Play's signs of dream and day residues is a purpose of resilience. *To resile* is perhaps the most significant ripple that flows throughout and across not only a purpose collective, but most importantly throughout and across the ocean of symbols and meanings set forth by Miranda in his artwork to speak to the regenerative essence of life itself and of humans' abilities to play and dream in engendering healing.

In terms of studies dedicated to understanding resilience as a human process, contemporary antecedents may be located in developmental psychopathological research on poverty, schizophrenia, and trauma in the 1970s and 1980s (Cicchetti & Garmezy, 1993). Since then, more scholars have studied resilience across a wide range of topics: community trauma and development (e.g. Harvey, Mondesir, & Aldrich, 2007), family agency and change (e.g. Bayat, 2007; Landau, 2007; Walsh, 2007), youth to adulthood life transitions (e.g. Daining & DePanfilis, 2007), education and classroom motivation (e.g. Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007; Marshall, 2005), emotion regulation (e.g. Tugade & Fredrickson, 2006), attempted suicide (e.g. Roy, Sarchiapone, & Carli, 2007), and resilience study even has been expanded to contexts of culture and politics (e.g. Haeri, 2007; Radan, 2007; Tummala-Narra, 2007).

In general, what these studies provide is a collective understanding of those common roots and characteristics that may help to constitute and manifest resilience. Looking across the landscape of these studies and others, resilience may be identified in terms of but not limited to the following qualities: a psycho-physical mechanism that may arise out of traumatic experiences in order to re-orient and re-heal oneself and culture, an individual and collective experience to rebound from hardship, and a regenerative capacity for emerging new vulnerabilities and strengths during transition.

One important view on resilience is proposed by Mehl-Madrona (2007) in his study of narrative medicine. In this sense, Mehl-Madrona utilizes a metaphorically based rendition of this dynamic:

> Resiliency is a property that seems connected with the idea that we stand in a certain central location in reference to all the relationships of our lives. Elders say, "when you step off the good red road, then comes sickness and disease." The good red road is the road from wisdom to compassion, the road of connecting to all of life from the center of your being, from your heart. It is a road of forgiveness, compassion, and love. It is a road from which we even look our enemies in the eye and shake their hands for making us stronger. (p. 46)

Mehl-Madrona's definition is important for two key reasons. First, it hints at the rhetorical qualities of resilience that other studies seem to neglect. Psychopathological and psychotherapeutic studies focus on the state of resilience and its key properties. In extending and adapting these theories and merging them with rhetorical and performative frameworks, I suggest that resilience is a process very much rooted in strategic symbol utilization to evoke a response—healing—on behalf of another party and that it is a

performed phenomenon, hence a person or a people may choose to resile and to be resilient for a variety of reasons largely based on growth out of yet beyond trauma.

Second, Mehl-Madrona's conceptualization is important because it also may facilitate an understanding of the very distinct role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua. Miranda's work predominantly speaks in reference to resiling from a collective historical and contemporary memory of dictatorship, war, natural disaster, corrupt politics, and hyper-capitalist exploitation. In so doing, he strategically locates the *granadilla*, in representation of Nicaragua as a whole, in dichotomous situations (e.g. the *maquila* worker and her head in relation to the *caudillo*), yet synchronically and chiasmically works through those binaries in creating another meta-message for the future from the resources he is given in the current waking life condition of Nicaragua. Ultimately, resilience is that particular message of hope and transformation that Miranda has un/consciously in mind for Nicaragua, and which necessarily arises out of trauma in lieu of potentially facilitating a propelling of a cycling of life's "what ifs" into lived realities.

***Layer III: Lived World~*** Overall, then, these collective strategic spots help to engender a third layer that speaks to a possibility for creating a new world in which to live. To choose, one's own life, you as a person in the world, resources one has on hand, and to resile are those rhetorical strategies suggested un/consciously by Miranda through his artwork. Likewise, what is equally important is the role of translation amidst these strategies. In Layer I, Miranda utilizes historic artistic voices (e.g. Dalí, Morales, and Magritte) to mitigate a visual language of surreality. In Layer II, he uses puppetry as a means by which to translate his dreams for a larger audience. Consequently, this is the

point from which Layer III arises—this larger audience is that of viewers who engage with his work.

The viewer holds a paramount position in the translation process as a whole, for it is the viewer who effectuates a collective transformation dimension, bringing it full-circle in the scheme of things. In Layer III, the viewer picks up where Miranda inevitably leaves off; it is the viewer who must translate Miranda's playing into his or her own, incorporating his paintings as agencies for healing in our own lives, which then may become "works of art" to be translated by someone else for their own healing purposes, and so forth. The following abridgment may help to visualize Layer III's leg of the revolution.

*Viewer in the World: Synopsis*

***Act~*** to choose

***Scene~*** one's own life

***Agent~*** you as a viewer

***Agency~*** resources you have on hand

***Purpose~*** to resile

While resilience is the overarching tapestry by which the threads of Layers I, II, and III come to fruition, "choice," says Foss, Waters, and Armada (2007), "is the basic mechanism by which the world [read resilience in the world] is manifest, then, and as agents choose…real, material outcomes are created in line with their choices" (p. 220). In other words, choice is the crossroads at which a negotiation of self, structural conditions, or resources one has on hand, and outcome may be realized. According to Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl (1959),

> We who lived in the concentration camps can remember then men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: The last of his freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. (p. 104)

Ultimately, it is this notion of choice by which playing may be translated into lived reality. Choice is that thread that helps to fashion the silver-lining of storm clouds and that bridge that connects one's self to a larger world in which one lives. In terms of Miranda's work, it is the point at which those strategies that are suggested by a role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua may transform into those that indicate a role of post-revolutionary Nicaraguan art in engendering resilience in the world—precisely the point at which research question two takes the reigns.

*Surrealism as Mediation*

The second research question guiding my thesis considers how surrealism might function to mediate those strategies—to choose, one's own life, you as a person/viewer in the world, resources one has on hand, and to resile—suggested by a role of art in post-revolutionary Nicaragua in order to communicate a new kind of world (post-revolutionary Nicaraguan art in engendering resilience in the world). In this section, I will address the roots of surrealism as mediation as they may arise from the cycle of dream and day residues suggested by Miranda's paintings in relation to viewers and as they concomitantly may engender enthymematic identification between artist and audience.

***Dream and Enthymeme~*** That Miranda "puppetically" translates his dreams to canvas in order to engender a shift in viewers' unconscious operations is testimony to the resilient nature of dreaming. To recall the tentative dream and day residual cycle proposed towards the latter half of Layer II: Miranda's lucid incorporation of his dreams to waking life creates dream residue, that then may become the day residues of viewers, who then may incorporate those images into their own dreams, which may facilitate a gradual transformation of one's surroundings (since dreaming as internal playing may help to catalyze culture).

As a process that has awesome potential for remaking one's lived environment, this dream-day residual cycle positions surrealism as a prime force in mediating the transitional traffic from dream to reality and vice versa. With that said, surrealism is predominantly encoded as a mediating source through Miranda's interweaving of enthymeme throughout the aggregate of his paintings. *Enthymeme* refers to "an incomplete version of a formal deductive syllogism" (Griffin, 2006, p. 321). What makes this form of reasoning so powerful is that it depends upon identification with audience members in constructing its major argument. According to Bitzer (1959), "Because they are jointly produced by the audience, enthymemes intuitively unite speaker [read artist] and audience and provide the strongest possible proof…The audience itself helps construct the proof by which it is persuaded" (p. 409).

In Miranda's work, the painting aggregate functions as one giant visual enthymeme. To that end, if that enthymematic dynamic were to be transcribed, it would read as follows:

Major premise: *Dreamers plant seeds of resilience.*

Minor premise: *We, artists and audience members, are dreamers.*

Conclusion: *Therefore, we plant seeds of resilience.*

Essentially, Miranda leaves out those literal images of seeds (i.e. his major premise) to call for an audience to latently "fill in the blanks." In this process, he uses a culture-specific fruit—the *granadilla*—to stand in for his country as a way to invite and identify with Nicaraguans to join in on a collective journey to engender resilience. Even still, because Miranda uses a 4,000-year old, internationally and interculturally renowned and respected performance art and healing tool—puppetry—as a translatory medium, he also extends his consubstantial invitation to a diverse and arguably global audience. Point blank, the message is this: "Planting the seeds of surreality is a collective effort. In doing so, together we may engender a new kind of world where people may, in the words of Gioconda Belli (1989), 'bear their dreams' in cultivating an atmosphere where healing not only grows but thrives." In the end, however, while Miranda jubilantly calls his viewers to participate in vitalizing and manifesting the dream in the lived world, it is ultimately our choice to respond—to choose to plant the seeds for our lives and ourselves.

*Questions Summary*

Underlying the literal and latent workings of Dream and Play are Miranda's key rhetorical strategies for engendering resilience in the world. To choose, one's own life, you as a person/viewer in the world, resources one has on hand, and to resile point to a viewer's role in drawing upon her or his own inner strengths and "voices," standpoint in the world, and ability to choose to "plant those seeds" in cultivating a collective and

regenerative healing. Moreover, in Miranda's paintings surrealism functions as a mediating channel through which to navigate dream in a waking world—given its enthymematic framework in inviting an audience to participate in its construction—and subsequently may lay the groundwork for a necessary collective effort in manifesting and "pollinating" resilience. In the next section, I would like to focus on the role of the rhetorical critic in facilitating this process.

## Role of the Rhetorical Critic

Up to this point, I have purposefully avoided explicitly addressing the/my role of/as rhetorical critic, choosing instead to omnipresently concentrate on extracting the literal and latent meanings across the aggregate of Miranda's paintings. However, in considering the role of the audience in choosing to participate within the dream-to-reality resilient-making process, it becomes clear that the role of the rhetorical critic is intimately intertwined with this dynamic. In this section, I would like to address this role from a broader to more specific explanation.

In a general sense, the role of the rhetorical critic is one that entails offering a critical interpretation of some social phenomenon in lieu of understanding that phenomenon in a new light; what it can teach us about people as communicators; and how and why it may impact one's own life, communities, and world for better and for worse (Foss, 2004). For the present study, I have offered my critical interpretation of Miranda's paintings in engendering transformation in a post-revolutionary epoch. I have found, analyzed, and discussed the basic elements across the aggregate of his work: a manifestation of his dreams into painting form leads us to symbolically understanding Miranda as a puppeteer who is playing with these elements, which then leads us to

understanding how we as viewers, too, can play and incorporate these tools into our own lives for healing.

On a more mezzo level, I have used Burke's (1969a) dramatistic pentad as a tool to reveal the underlying motivation driving Miranda's artistic insight. I have identified three layers of pentads, each arising out of the next, in order to illuminate not only their collective messages of recovery, but most importantly how their meanings may promote resilient growth out of stygian ongoing experiences of trauma. Specifically, the healing steps of art therapy deeply have impacted my analysis of Miranda's work. To that end, art therapy essentially involves the patient healing herself or himself through her or his work with encouragement from the therapist. In the first step, a patient creates a work of art through any medium of choice (e.g. oil painting, sand art, clay, puppetry) that speaks to her or his experiences. For the second step, the therapist inquires about the literal elements of a patient's artwork, highlighting those that are particularly emphasized therein. Finally, the patient offers her or his interpretation of the work, engaging with those elements that hold significant meaning in creating the whole of the interpretation and engendering a deeper understanding of those experiences that prompted the art piece in the first place and how they may inform the present and future for healing (Rack, personal communication, April 9, 2008).

The analysis that I have presented here is, in essence, a rhetorical mimicry of an art therapy approach. In my role as a rhetorical critic, I have at once become patient and therapist locating the literal elements of his paintings and then ascribing meaning to them on two fronts: Miranda's own personal healing processes and what those processes suggest for growth in the world. Ultimately, my analysis becomes a response to

Miranda's "call." In doing so, I hope that this thesis becomes one of those seeds that may flourish in helping to "bear the dream" of resilience.

## Future Implications

As my thesis comes to a close, I would like to take a moment to suggest the ways in which this study could become a building block for future thought and research. These suggestions may take shape according to a discourse of transformation and a relationship between resilience and visual communication.

In light of my findings and analysis and discussion, I would like to suggest that my study could contribute to a discourse of transformation. To that end, as inspired by those art performance theories propounded by Frankfurt school intellectuals Theodor Adorno (1991) and Walter Benjamin (1968), I, too, would like to suggest that art may hold a place in our global, globalizing, and globalized era (art in the age of free market consumption) for recreating the self (performance of identity) and articulating a utopian-like moment in pursuit of transforming the future for liberatory and self-determining purposes. Likewise, I believe that resilience may be one of these purposes and thus may be enacted—i.e. performed—given our unique abilities as "symbol-using animals" (Burke, 1966). In other words, a person does not necessarily have to be a viewer of Miranda's work to perform/create resilience, for s/he may become such a translator on her or his own terms in whatever circumstances s/he may find her/himself.

In light of my findings and analysis and discussion, I would like to suggest that my study could contribute to an understanding of resilience in visual communicative practices. No study to date has been devoted to investigating the rhetorical resilient characteristics embedded within visual cultural artifacts. Perhaps my study could be a

cornerstone in facilitating an illumination on how these dynamics may transpire in our increasingly visual day-in-age.

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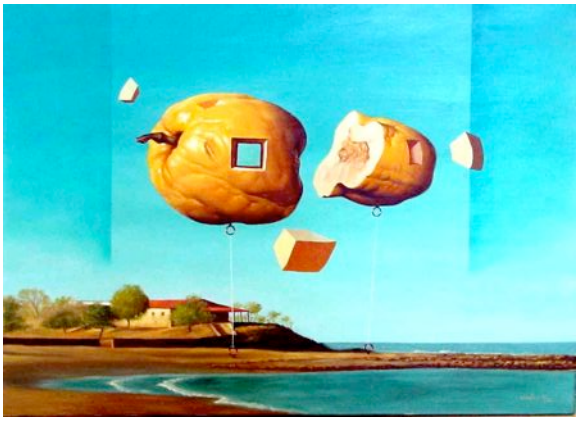
# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

Contents of Analyzed Works Featured in Chapter 1

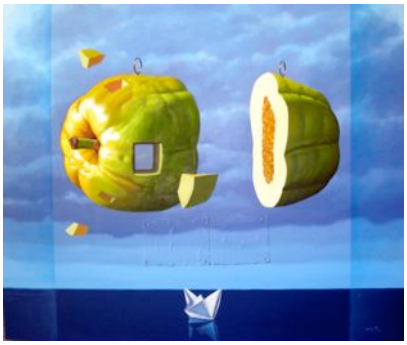
(Figures 1 & 2; left to right)



## Appendix B

Contents of Analyzed Works Featured in Layer I Acts

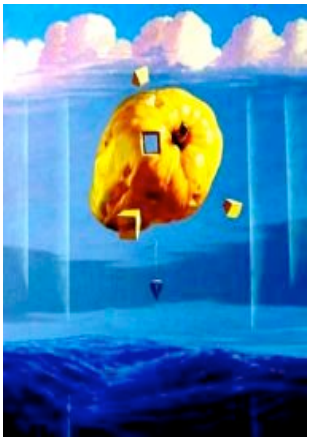
(Figures 5-9; left to right)



## Appendix C

Contents of Analyzed Works Featured in Layer I Scenes

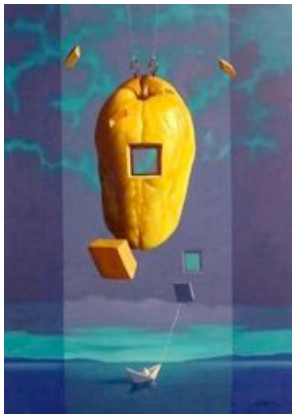
(Figures 10-16; left to right)



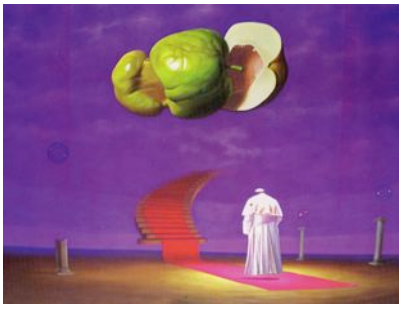
## Appendix D

Contents of Analyzed Works Featured in Layer I Agents

(Figures 17-23; left to right)





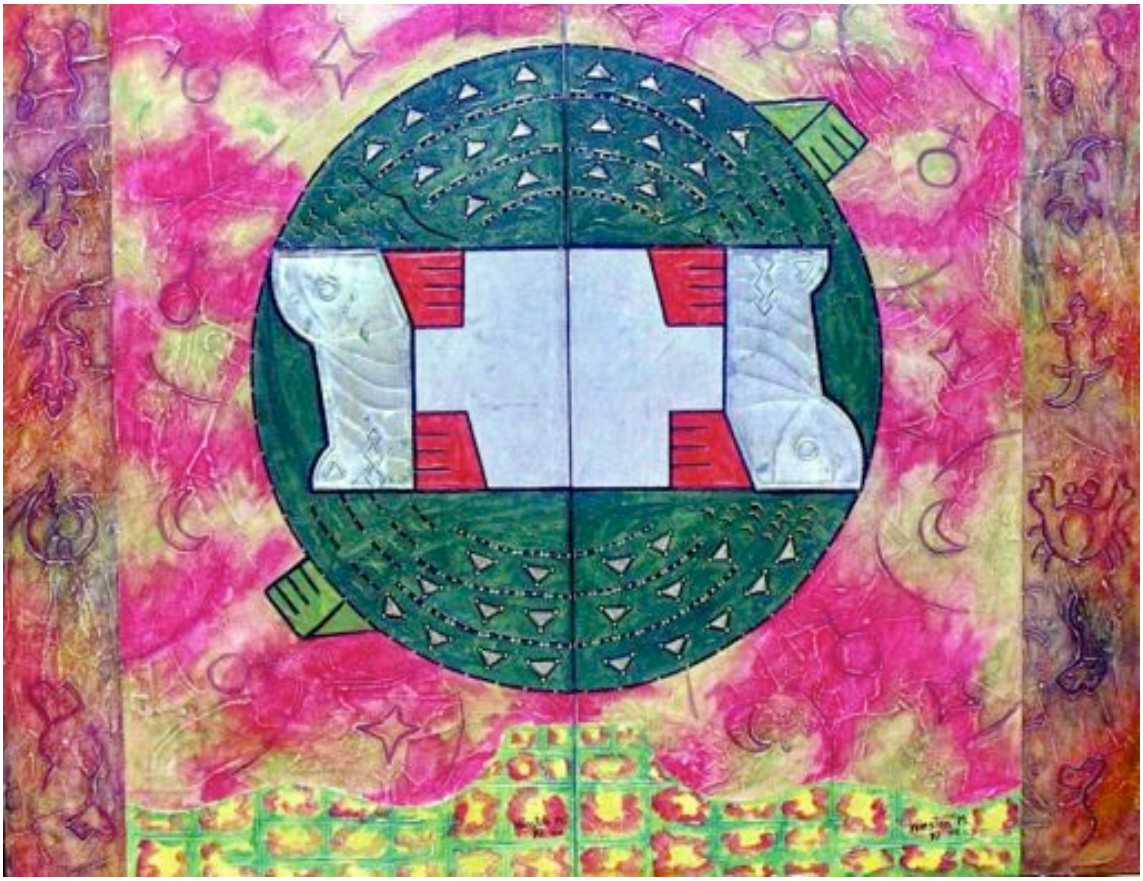

## Appendix E

Contents of Analyzed Works Featured in Layer I Agencies

(Figures 24-30; left to right)

# Appendix F

Contents of Not Previously Featured Primitivist Work



*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

# Appendix G

Contents of Not Previously Featured Realist Works

*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda*. (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)


*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

## Appendix H

Contents of Not Previously Featured Hybrid Primitivist/Realist Works

*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda*. (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

*Oil on canvas by Winston Miranda.* (Image courtesy of the artist, 2007.)

## Appendix I

"The Dream Bearers"

by Gioconda Belli (1989)

In all the prophecies
the destruction of the world is written.

All the prophecies foretell
humanity creating its own destruction.

But time and life endlessly renewed
also engendered a generation of lovers and dreamers;
men and women who dreamt not of the world's destruction,
but of building a world of butterflies
and nightingales.

From an early age, they were branded by love.
Behind their everyday appearance
they hid tenderness and the midnight sun.
Their mothers often found them crying over a dead bird
and years later, found many of them
dead, too, like birds.

These beings lived with translucid women
and left them impregnated with honey and children
who grew like grass under the caress of rainy days.

This is how the dream bearers multiplied in the world,
fiercely attacked by those who bore catastrophic prophecies.
They were called deluded romantics, inventor of utopias.
They were told their words were old—
which was true, since paradise has been an ancient memory
in the heart of humanity.
Those who accumulated riches feared them,
and hurled their armies against them.

But every night the dream bearers made love,
and their seed continued growing in the wombs
of women who not only bore dreams but multiplied them,
and made them run and speak.

This is how the world engendered its life again
just as it had engendered those who invented the way
to extinguish the sun.

The dream bearers survived the cold climates,
but in the warm climates they seemed to sprout
        by spontaneous generation.
Perhaps the palm trees, the blue skies, the torrential rains
had something to do with this.
The truth is that these specimens, like hard-working little ants,
never stopped dreaming and building their beautiful worlds,
worlds of brothers and sisters, of men and women who called
        each other *compañeros*,
who taught each other to read, consoled each other
        in times of death,
healed and cared for each other, loved and helped each other
in the art of loving and in the defense of happiness.

They were happy in their world of sugar and wind
and people came from all directions to be impregnated
        by their breath
and by their clear gazes
and the people who had known them
went out in all directions
bearing dreams
dreaming new prophecies
that spoke of times of butterflies and nightingales
in which the world would not have to end up in a hecatomb.
On the contrary, scientists would design
fountains, gardens, surprising toys
to further humanity's happiness.

*They are dangerous* read the message that rolled off the presses
*They are dangerous* said the presidents in their speeches
*They are dangerous* murmured the makers of war

*They must be destroyed* read the message that rolled off
the presses
*They must be destroyed* said the presidents in their speeches
*They must be destroyed* murmured the makers of war.

The dream bearers knew their power
and therefore were not surprised.
And they also knew that life had engendered them
to protect itself from the death announced in the prophecies.
And so they defended their lives even with death.
And so they cultivated gardens of dreams
and exported them tied with big colorful ribbons
and the prophets of darkness spent days and nights
watching the secret routes and the roads
searching for these dangerous shipments
which they never succeeded in intercepting
because the person with no eyes for dreaming
cannot see dreams either by day or night.

And in the world a dream-traffic has been unleashed
that the traffickers in death cannot stop;
and everywhere there are packages with big bows
that only this new race of people can see,
and the seed of these dreams cannot be detected
because it is enclosed in red hearts
or in ample maternity dresses
where tiny feet of dreamers teem inside the wombs that bear them

It is said that earth, after giving birth to them,
unchained a rainbow in the sky
and blew the breath of fertility on the roots of trees.

All we know is that we have seen them
We know that life engendered them
as protection against the prophecies of death. (pp. 97, 99, 101, 103)