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## Gallery Nord: 21 Abusive Centuries; Earthly Bodies (http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/)

September 9th, 2011 – DAN R. GODDARD (HTTP://GLASSTIRE.COM/AUTHOR/DAN-R-GODDARD/)



(http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/veliz-carla-aguja/) Carla Veliz works to repair the silk she has abused

For 21 days representing all the societal and environmental abuse of 21 centuries, San Antonio artist Carla Veliz (http://carlaveliz.com/) beat, scraped, tore, kicked, stomped on and generally tormented a soft, innocent piece of silk. Then she spent another 21 days trying to undo the damage to create “XXI: Who We Are and Who We Could Become.”

The tortured and then revived 16-by-6-foot piece of silk is the centerpiece of Veliz’s Fotoseptiembre (http://www.safotofestival.com/fotoseptiembre-2011.html) exhibit at Gallery Nord (http://www.gallerynord.com/), which is also featuring the romantic figure and landscape photographs of Ramin Samandari (http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=207469035981209).

A native of Piedras Negras (http://www.tourbymexico.com/coahuila/pidmegr/piedrasn.htm), Veliz wanted to illustrate the stark contrast between the poverty of Mexico and the prosperity of the United States by showing all the abuse that humans inflict on the planet as well as acknowledging the beauty and joys that life has to offer. “I came up with the idea to purchase a large, raw piece of white silk because of its natural beauty and softness,” she says. “I associate innocence and something being pure and simple with silk.”

She documented the process of abusing and healing the silk in a colorful, lyrical, 21-minute video. She begins by hanging the silk on a tree and then stuffing it with brush. She cuts it with knives. And then she washes it in a metal tub.



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Houston Art Partners Conference on Arts in Education at MFAH Coming Sept. 13  
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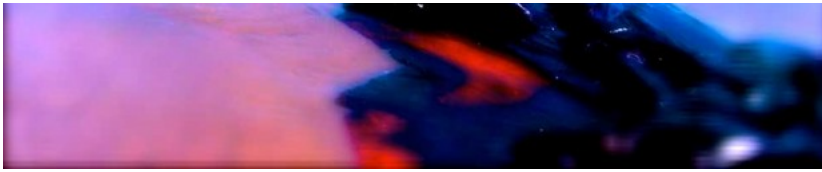
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Visual Arts Preview: The Gallery and Museum Shows You Can’t Miss This Fall | FrontRow  
(http://frontrow.dmagazine.com/2011/09/visual-arts-preview-the-gallery-and-museum-shows-you-can%e2%80%99t-miss-this-fall/) on 2011 Fall Preview (http://glasstire.com/2011/09/06/2011-fall-preview/#comment-8215)



(<http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/veliz-carla-ahogada-8-11/>)

icky, black goo

Sporting high heels and fishnet stockings, she walks on the silk in a ritualistic nighttime strut. She hangs it up to dry and then attacks it with a homemade flame thrower made with an aerosol can. She takes the silk to the beach and spreads it out to absorb salt water and sand. Caught up in the meditative drama of her metaphor for world disorder, she says she became depressed and gained weight. "I tried to reverse the effects of the abuse, but I knew it would be impossible," Veliz says.

After the violence of the first half, the video becomes peaceful and calming as she gently washes the silk and repairs it with needle and thread. She adds small pearls and other decorations to the rips and tears in the material. As seen at Gallery Nord, the silk has become a thing of beauty, a shimmering, translucent banner of peace.

Walter Paul Bebirian (<http://bebirianart.com>) on The Ten List: How to piss off an arts writer (<http://glasstire.com/2011/08/27/the-ten-list-how-to-piss-off-an-arts-writer/#comment-8145>)

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(<http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/veliz-carla-sueno/>)

Glowing, shimmering

Veliz created a series of still images from the video that range from icky, black goo from oil or other contaminants to bright, glowing abstractions. From what looks like bloody graffiti spelling out "Basta ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C2%A1Ya\\_basta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C2%A1Ya_basta))," which loosely translates as "enough is enough," the silk undergoes a dramatic rejuvenation, a parable of deconstruction and reconstruction.

Using the Texas Hill Country landscapes of Enchanted Rock ([http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/enchanted\\_rock/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/enchanted_rock/)) and the Guadalupe River as backdrops, Ramin Samandari contrasts the human form with gnarled tree trunks and rocky expanses in his series of large-scale black and white prints titled "Earthly Bodies."

"The human form in relation to other forms, space and the intangible forces of time, place and history are the primary concerns that fuel my work," Samandari says in his artist statement. "I approach the making of photographs as a means to document my philosophical, artistic and personal examination of life."







(<http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/samandari-ramin-gaze-8-11-2/>)  
Ramin Samandari's "Gaze Furtively on Waters Serene"

A nude woman is draped over a rock sunk beneath the waters of the Guadalupe in "Muse of My Heart." Another nude woman with an ornate tattoo on her lower back looks out over the river in "Gaze Furtively on Waters Serene." Looking ravaged by time but still enduring, a giant, twisted tree trunk is titled "I Am Life, Unbearable, Implacable Life."



(<http://glasstire.com/2011/09/09/gallery-nord-21-abusive-centuries-earthly-bodies/samandari-ramin-speech-8-111/>)  
"Speech of Silent Things"

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