

De Ferrari

Broken Tropics

Contingency in Contemporary Caribbean Art

Broken Tropics examines contemporary art installations, performances, photography, and street art from three primary sites of compounding vulnerability: Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. Guillermina De Ferrari poses two central questions: How does contingency affect our humanness, and what does art making under duress say about being human? With the understanding that being human is a praxis and that art is a practical philosophy, De Ferrari introduces the notion of an "art of contingency." This creative practice engages with the accidental and the unexpected to highlight two contradictory facts: that uncertainty is a predictable feature of Caribbean life and that, nonetheless, misfortune does not have to be fate. Placing long-standing concerns about social, political, and economic injustice on a continuum with the concerns of disaster studies and ecocriticism, Broken Tropics shows how people reshape and reinvent the social world in response to external pressures, and how the arts envision new forms of living in a broken world.

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