

Adler Guerrier, 25, works predominantly with photographs laid out in patterns that become cinematic. A show of his works is at the Miami Art Museum through Oct. 7. Below, a still from a short film in the exhibit, 'after/for/with (mingus, ellington, mjq),' depicts a clown.

# young at art

ADLER  
GUERRIER'S  
CONCEPTUAL  
WORK, ON  
DISPLAY AT  
THE MIAMI  
ART MUSEUM,  
IS IMPORTANT  
FOR REASONS  
BEYOND  
HIS AGE

BY ELIZABETH HANLY  
Special to The Herald

At 25, conceptual artist Adler Guerrier is the second-youngest artist to have a solo show at the Miami Art Museum.

He also is among the youngest artists to be included in *Freestyle*, the so-called post-black show that ran last spring at The Studio Museum in Harlem. And Guerrier was one of the youngest artists in last winter's *Travels through Hyperreality* exhibition at Miami's Museum of Contemporary Art.

"All the attention feels a little weird and crazy to me," says Guerrier, a graduate of New World School of the Arts.

But that attention is well-deserved — and for reasons other than the artist's precociousness.

Amy Rosenblum, who with Lorie Mertes selected several of the artists for MAM's New Work Miami series (part three of the series opened Friday, featuring Guerrier and Consuelo Castañeda) describes him as one of Miami's brilliant minds. Not exactly the first words one might think of to describe an artist, even a conceptual one.

Guerrier works predominantly with magazine-size photographs laid out in patterns that become cinematic. He often uses a soundtrack, a taped musical score that adds to the exhibition's cinematic effect.



PHOTOS BY CARL JUSTE/HERALD STAFF

# Young artist has long explored the world from inside out

▶ ART, FROM 3M

Guerrier is fascinated by the physicality of things. His MAM show features photographs of extraordinary color and sometimes terrible and understated emotional ambiguity. Moods keep changing, so much so that it's hard to pin them down.

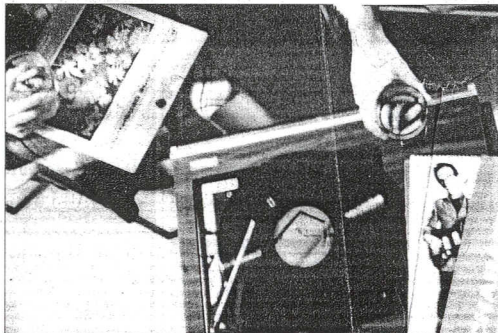
Guerrier follows this predilection to work with bits and pieces of stories, producing close-ups that are never quite close enough. And all of it is set to the music of Mingus, Ellington and The Modern Jazz Quartet.

## COMPLEX STORIES

It's appropriate that this latest installment of New York Miami — a year-long exploration of the work of eight Miami artists — should feature Guerrier and Cuban conceptual artist Castañeda. Before Castañeda came to Miami, she was one of the youngest professors at Havana's prestigious Instituto Superior de Arte.

Guerrier was 12 when he came from Haiti to North Miami with his family. The Guerriers had been middle class by Haitian standards, and Adler, the eldest of six children, was preparing to enter high school when he arrived.

It was almost by accident that he attended Design and Architecture Senior High, the Miami-Dade public art and architecture magnet school.

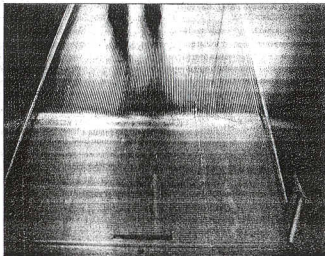


Adler Guerrier's still of a record player, above, is set to "Haitian Fight" by Mingus. Below, Guerrier's "Untitled (Airport)" 2000, is also on display at the Miami Art Museum.

CARL JUSTE/HERALD STAFF

"I'm still not sure why I was admitted," Guerrier says with a laugh. "I never thought of myself as an artist; in fact, I'd never even drawn."

But he had a gift for mathematics and a fascination for how things are constructed. "It opened some weird aperture that brought in a bounty of light," Guerrier says of his time at DASH.



All of which led Guerrier to his current preoccupation, which he describes as the desire to tell complex stories about cities and the people who live in them.

The Guerrier work represented in Harlem's Studio Museum show, which closed in

April, had much the same flavor. Museum curator Thelma Golden learned of Guerrier from artist Glenn Ligon, who traveled to Miami to develop a public-spaces project. Guerrier was working at the time installing art at a museum, work he still does to support

## IF YOU GO

**New York Miami:** Consuelo Castañeda and Adler Guerrier '14 at the Miami Art Museum, 101 W. Flagler St. Miami, through Oct. 7. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, third Thursdays until 9 p.m., noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for seniors and students, and free for members and children younger than 12. Second Saturdays are free for families and every Sunday is for Information: 305-375-3000 or visit [www.miamiartmuseum.org](http://www.miamiartmuseum.org).

himself.

Ligon came back talking not only of the artist's photographs, but of the way Guerrier had shown him around town. Ligon was intrigued by the way Guerrier responded to physical space itself.

"I couldn't really understand what exactly Ligon was trying to describe until I saw Guerrier's photographs," says Golden.

And when she did, she chose to exhibit not one but two groups of those photos.

## BEYOND RACE?

The idea behind Golden's New York show, which sparked a torrent of controversy and intellectual exchange in art journals and newspapers, was that art in the United States has moved beyond the multiculturalism that defined it in the 1990s. Artists of whatever ethnicity were now coming together, nurturing each other, and the parameters of identity had changed. Perhaps even the parameters of race.

"And yet this is not a conversation we are having in Miami," Guerrier says. "And I don't think we need to. Our demographics suggest, maybe even assure that."

"In any case, all this talk might well be a declaration of independence, when we are already free."

This kind of phrase is Guerrier at his best. A slightly self-effacing man, Guerrier can easily argue obscure philosophy or theoretical positions at

length. And then, in a moment he's able to synthesize it into something immediate.

"At the very least absence of this conversa Miami is one reason that an interesting place to be," he says. "Another, of course the physicality of the city. The very emptiness of screams out for some record it. We are not with substantial history."

"There is very little to define Miami except its physicality. I find this intriguing."

## HAITIAN EFFECT

As for whether informs his art, Guerrier sure. Still, he mentions as an afterthought that Mingus song cut he has for his MAM exhibit called *Haitian Fight* is written to honor the uprising on the island.

When asked about his: ories of Haiti, Guerrier about the guns. And bodies in the streets about the physicality of images.

"There must always grain of memory we all salvage," he says. "To old neighborhood age instance. But I know the cality, the physical pi those memories are long. Not to be recovered."

"But there is the text things. I wasn't drawing child, but I was exploring remember exploring and textures from the out."