

Safe Harbor



**collaborative sculpture by Pedro Ospina
and members of the North Philadelphia community**

Temple University Children's Medical Center, July-September 2001

a project of COSACOSA art at large, Inc.

SafeHarbor

collaborative sculpture by **Pedro Ospina**
and members of the **North Philadelphia community**

Temple University Children's Medical Center, July-September 2001

a project of **COSACOSA art at large, Inc.**

MID ATLANTIC
ARTS FOUNDATION



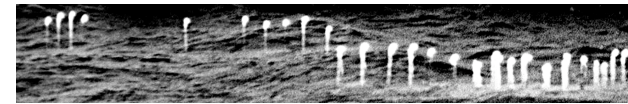
NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

PENNSYLVANIA
COUNCIL
ON THE



Promoting the creative power
in people with disabilities

SafeHarbor was supported by a grant from *Artist as Catalyst*, a program of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, made possible by major funding from The Vira I. Heinz Endowment, The William Penn Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Additional funding for **SafeHarbor** was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts; the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; VSA, an international, non-profit organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities through the arts for children and adults with disabilities; The Philadelphia Cultural Fund; The 1957 Charity Trust; The Alexis Rosenberg Foundation; Grasshopper, Inc.; and The Home Depot, Inc. Special thanks to Pedro E. Hernández, Judith Abrams, and Alwyn Cassil for their support.



Healing Art by Miriam Seidel

In cultures still in touch with shamanic tradition, art is not seen as a separate concept. It is something that occurs, often in a ritual context, and interwoven with a healing intent. The healer/artist does this work in service to a larger community; and the community often comes together to receive it. What we would see as the “art” part -- the intricate sand painting, or days-long song cycles of the Navajo Holyway curing ceremony, for example -- may not even survive the ceremonial moment. To take another example, an Eskimo mask, which today might be displayed and admired for its beauty in a gallery or museum, would traditionally have been seen more as a remnant, or a valued place-holder, only gaining its full meaning in ritual use.

Many contemporary artists have searched for ways to recover this archaic relationship of art, healing and ritual. Leaving the studio, they have engaged with other people to create new forms of art, that may open possibilities for healing on different levels: individually, among people, and even for wounded landscapes. Christiane Corbat is an artist who works with individuals dealing with illness and other traumas, creating plaster body casts and adorning them with symbolically healing materials and images. Duane McDiarmid has created a ritual artwork around an oil spill, showing concern for our connection to “sick” environments. Working with a whole community in Chengdu, China, artist Betsy Damon oversaw ritual events that exposed a river’s pollution; later she was invited to return and help plan a riverside water garden for that city.

Pedro Ospina, the artist of the *Safe Harbor* project, is deeply comfortable with folk traditions of Mexico, Brazil and other countries that have roots in shamanic curative practices. His commitment to work with traditional artisans, with people of indigenous heritage, and with marginalized groups

has given him a full-bodied sense of how art can work outside the mainstream system of exhibition and sales.

Art organizations working within disenfranchised and disabled communities have also developed innovative ways to rejoin art and healing. COSACOSA’s decision to create an artwork around milagros -- small holy offerings that may be fashioned in the form of the body part to be healed or other symbolic imagery -- was an inspired one. By asking the children (some of them dealing with serious illness) and older people to think of a wish or hope for their future, or an offering they would like to make, the *Safe Harbor* project

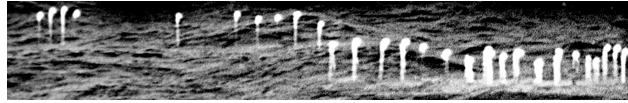
opened the possibility for their own art-making to carry conscious healing intent. The resulting several hundred pieces are rich with mythological resonance: fish, butterflies, many birds, a boat, and other images of hope and transformation. Even pieces spelling the maker’s name, or depicting money or a house, are empowering, reinforcing feelings of safety, security or identity.

The large artwork encompassing this collective effort, which will lend its wishes and hopes to the well-travelled lobby of Temple University Children’s Medical Center, speaks of something more than individuals focusing on their own healing. Along with the many art-making workshops, in which neighborhood children worked alongside hospitalized children, and older people alongside younger people, the piece itself points to community-wide possibilities for healing. The original ground of healing art was shared ritual; in works like this, we can begin to see how, by gathering together a whole (healed) group of individuals, such processes may restore -- and empower -- stressed or fragmented communities.

Miriam Seidel contributes to Art in America (as Corresponding Editor), the Philadelphia Inquirer and other publications. She has written before on the connections among art, ritual and healing.

**...the Safe Harbor project
opened the possibility
for...art-making to carry
conscious healing intent.**

Safe Harbor milagro workshop at Temple University Children’s Medical Center.



The Project

Medicine is the art of healing. From the earliest of times, healers and artists combined their efforts to sustain the health of the community. In ancient Epidaurus, the temple of Asclepius, Greek god of medicine, was not merely a site of physical healing. It was a place of poetry, theater, music and art that enabled the mind to participate in the healing of the body.

The *Safe Harbor* project reasserts this age-old relationship between art and healing. For three months, interdisciplinary artist Pedro Ospina lived and worked on the campus of Temple University Children's Medical Center. Through over sixty public workshops -- with pediatric and adult patients, their families, community clinic visitors and residents of the North Philadelphia neighborhoods surrounding the hospital -- the *Safe Harbor* sculpture emerged as a true and symbolic synthesis of community victories, values and visions.

Safe Harbor issued from two ongoing programs of COSACOSA art at large, Inc., a not-for-profit organization creating new art specific to city neighborhoods and public spaces. *Community Collections*, a series of artist commissions and media projects, examines Philadelphia's cultural histories and changing urban landscapes. COSACOSA's *Healing Art Project* brings individuals in the hospital together with local community members to learn new artistic techniques and about each other. Designed to engage the full range of out city's cultural communities in the art-making process, the project encompasses a series of artists' commissions and exhibitions; community workshops; and other public presentations.

Since 1999, Temple University Children's Medical Center has collaborated with COSACOSA to host *Healing Art Project* workshops on site. The hospital is a relatively new facility, just three years in operation and eager to find innovative ways to reach out to the community it serves. Located on Broad Street in the heart of North Philadelphia, Temple Children's is unique in its function not just as a

health provider, but as an open, accessible public space and as an advocate for the advancement of the local community.

The hospital is also unusual in its architectural design. Most of its structural, wayfinding, and decorative elements incorporate a nautical theme: waves of flooring and benches in the lobby, sailing ship plaques at every elevator bank, oceanic wallpaper borders on the patient floors. Given the hospital's active efforts to provide a neighborhood support system, COSACOSA Director Kimberly Niemela immediately saw a "safe harbor" connection.

Niemela devised a site-specific project to enable community ownership of the hospital. She encouraged city residents physically and metaphorically to define their own *Safe Harbor*: a collection of *milagros*, decorative metal amulets

created to symbolize each individual's concerns or desires. She invited Ospina, a veteran COSACOSA artist and educator, into residence to create the *Safe Harbor* sculptural installation and to lead the project's community workshops.

While in residence, Ospina worked directly with hospital patients and com-

munity residents to create over five hundred aluminum, brass and copper *milagros* to cover and complete the *Safe Harbor* sculpture. To accommodate different abilities, *milagros* also were modeled in bronze casting wax, foil and cloth. Numerous organizations collaborated with COSACOSA to enable the broadest possible community involvement in the project. Workshops were held not only at Temple Children's, but at Temple's main hospital, Shriners Hospital for Children, community clinic locations, the local branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Geriatric Center and neighborhood block parties. At every location, participants designed and fabricated *milagros* unique to their lives, histories or experience of healing -- the mastering of a physical, cultural, or financial barrier.

The making and giving of symbolic items invokes a social process through which a community may organize and understand itself -- interrelationships among individuals and

ideologies, past perceptions and promised futures. *Milagros* created during *Safe Harbor* community workshops yield insight not only to the common experience of the project's participants, but to those needs and desires universally shared. Prevalent symbols hold archetypal and cultural, as well as personal significance. Suns radiate creative energy and clarity. Stars actualize lofty goals and dreams. Fish survive in the depths of living-giving water. Trees regenerate in an endless cycle of seasons. Flowers convey beauty and vitality, as well as impermanence. Houses provide stability and safety. Faces reveal ourselves or our loved ones. Hearts embody love, sincerity and compassion. Birds ascend in freedom to commanding heights. Butterflies change reality.

Ospina's design for the sculptural base of *Safe Harbor* applies similar imagery. Three large, free-standing figures combine to form the 20' by 8' by 2' sculpture: a phoenix and a butterfly enclosing a central arch. As the transformative

outer elements lean into the curve, the viewer visually enters the work. To pass under an arch is to be reborn -- particularly meaningful as this gateway is covered with the *milagros* created by hospital patients and neighborhood residents. Above the arch rises a key, empowering the community's wishes and dreams. The work is as playful as it is imposing, a visual environment to comfort and delight the hospital's small patients. *Safe Harbor*, in its symmetry and symbolism, offers a point of rest and promise along each visitor's healing journey.

The completed sculpture is located in the lobby of Temple Children's, an indoor atrium with expansive windows. The work is highly visible from Broad Street, a major Philadelphia thoroughfare, and from the surrounding neighborhood. *Safe Harbor* remains on permanent display -- small, individual artworks forming the essence of a larger design -- a collaborative, community spirit that has consequence far beyond the development of the installation itself.

...the Safe Harbor sculpture emerged as a true and symbolic synthesis of community victories, values and visions.

The Making of Milagros

The creation of *milagros* (literally meaning "miracles" in Spanish) is a folk art with its origins in antiquity. The design and use of these offerings today in Latin and indigenous American cultures appear to be unchanged from at least the classic period in Greece. The ancient citizens of Greece placed *milagros* -- *tamata* in modern Greek -- at special sites (including Epidaurus) with the hope of overcoming trouble or illness.

In Latin America, the custom is inextricably linked to making a promise or vow in a reciprocal contract with a saint. In return for healing or protection, the petitioner tenders the *milagro* as a visible sign of gratitude. These small creations most often portray figures, animals, or body parts and are typically fashioned from silver.

The urge to offer to a larger community such tangible evidence of our wishes and concerns is universal. In ancient Egypt, a symbolic reduction in the size of the offering reflected a cosmic order: the gift cannot be greater than the giver. Tiny charms substituted for the objects of daily life they depicted, imparting their magical potency to the receiver. Throughout Africa, amulets and talisman remain vehicles of vital energy. A unity of human and divine action is established through ritual donations of carved beads, stones and shells to one's contemporary or ancestral community.

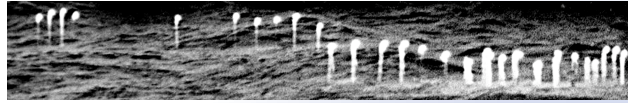
Miniature offerings also are found in Asia, where rites of communion take many forms. One presentation of the Hindu



Milagros from Latin America (from left to right, top to bottom): moon, scorpion, sacred heart, eyes, leaf, rooster, blood vessel, head, horse, lock, breast, supplicant, saint.

puja, a systematic series of veneration, is the adornment of a deity's image with small ornaments, along with flowers, ointments and cloth. In China, charms of jade and other precious stones commonly depict symbols of prosperity (peaches and fish), protection (gods, goddesses and swords), and hieroglyphs of good fortune.

The offering of forged iron and wax objects as devotional gifts was a widespread custom in early middle Europe, especially Germany and Austria. Figurative representations of livestock and other aspects of peasant life allowed animals, crops or individuals to receive the protection of a particular saint. In each community, these offerings were fashioned from traditional designs handed down for generations. *Milagros*, like the experiences and desires they represent, are undeniably cross-cultural and timeless.



A Community Collaboration

**“You oceans both, I close with you,
We murmer alike..rolling sands and drift..
These little shreds indeed standing for you and me and all.”**

-Walt Whitman
As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life

Community Participants

Antonio Adams
Christine Adams
Ishmael Ahmud
Khadejah Alexander
Tahisha Banks
Stephen Beiler
John Bellinger
Paulette Bethea
Zsalayiya Bethea-Cruz
Dashell Bland
Alfonso Branch
James Branch
Vivian Branch
Martesha Brookhart
Dorionne Brown
Michael Brown
Michelle Brown
Nick Bucla
Bianca Bullock
Christian Butler
Jeffrey Calland
Daricka Campbell
Briante Carr
Dione Chambers
Aqura Chapman
William Chapman
Jasmine Clowney
Ciara Coleman
Angel Colón
Tyzer Conyers
Matthew Cook
Tiffany Cook
Jennifer Crewalk
Nakyrah Davis
Bill Dawkins
Garth Dawkins, Jr.
Shaquial Day

Dit Wah Deng
Ghum Deng
Omyra Dickson
Niaem Dickson
Roberto Evans
Ronald Farmer
Dominic Fennell
Neema Fleet
Jerry Floyd
Tynisha Foreman
Alicia Frugale
Dominique Frederick
Alesia Fulton
Brittany Fulton
Najeeb Gallashaw
Jennirose Graboskie
Rayquan Grant
Xi'an Grant
Lexus Greene
Angie Reging Guyton
Anthony Handy
James Hayes
Michaela Healy
Sara Hendrix
Rashonda Henry
Shericea Holly
Zshaique Holman
Nigel Horne
Craig James
Laquetta Knighten
Hua Lim
Keng Lim
Meihang Lim
Meilin Lim
Karla Llanos
Siomara Lopez
Kevin Lucas
Ashley Magnum

Kenneth McGlone
Jamal McKievec
Alexandra Melián
Antonio Miller
Keiko Miyamori
Gerald Nobles
Queen Nobles
Anthony Olson
Sean Olson
Andréa Owens
Alejandro H. Pabón
Robert Peterson
Brittany Pleasant
Antanique Powell
Wendell Richardson
Danita Richie
Megan Rigney
Ms. C. Rivers
Nicole Rivers
Abdiel Román
Joe Schatz
Julie Schatz
Heather Sharper
Rana Sindhikara
Anaya Smith
Antonio Soltero
Isaiah Strother
Arbutus Stukes
Bill Talley
Reggie Taron
Grace Tang
Clifton Taylor
Tiara Thornton
Danny Torres
George Vinnie
Mark Wadley
Alison Waldron
Phillip Watts

Daniel Weary
E.T. Weary
Edward Weary, Jr.
Genise Weary
Michael Welles
Terra Whack
Shaniece White
Eudora Wiggins
Myles Wiggins
Darnell Wilkins
Denary Wilkins
Donte Wilkins
Ashley Williams
Jeramine Williams
Kiyani Williams
Reigna Williams
Charmaine Wimberly
Sadé Wimberly
Richard Yancy

Organizational Participants

Camp Substance
City of Philadelphia Health District #5
City of Philadelphia Health District #6
Ferguson Manor Community Center
Kenderton School
Nictown Boys and Girls Club
Nictown-Tioga Branch of
The Philadelphia Free Library
Norris Square Children's Center
Philadelphia Geriatric Center
Shriners Hospitals for Children
Temple Continuing Care Center
Temple Health Connection
Temple University Children's
Medical Center
Temple University Hospital
Zion Day Camp



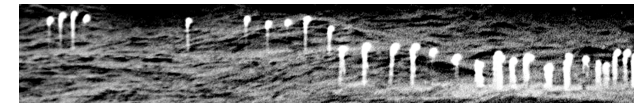
SafeHarbor

a project of COSACOSA art at large, Inc.



**collaborative sculpture by Pedro Ospina
and members of the North Philadelphia community**

wood and over 500 aluminum, brass and copper milagros; 20' x 8' x 2'; 2001.
Temple University Children's Medical Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Milagro Stories

The **SafeHarbor** milagros are stories in microcosm -- miniature portraits of experience, hope, and desire. Eight of the over five hundred stories contained in the installation are presented here. Together they reveal the often forgotten connections that bind our human community -- a unity of aspiration and apperception "indeed standing for you and me and all."



Paulette Bethea, Zshaylya Bethea-Cruz, and Zshaique Holman

Paulette Bethea's milagro is ever-changing, a windmill flower that varies with every movement, every touch. "We were at the hospital," she explains, "and I know a lot of children are sick there. Like a windmill spins around you might be sick today, but you'll feel better tomorrow. Flowers, they might fade today, but they bloom again tomorrow. That's why I made it." Her children, Zshaylya, five, (who was just in Temple Children's) and Zshaique, three, also created milagros of flowers and tiny people. Zshaique even named a little man after himself!

Billy and Aqura Chapman

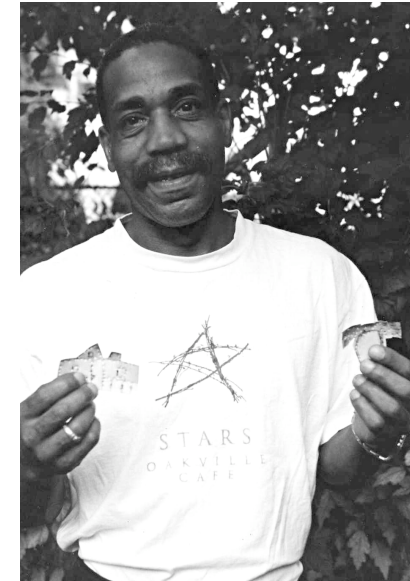
Ten-year-old Billy Chapman imbued his fanciful sea creatures -- bubbling fish, spouting whales, and turtles hiding among the seaweed -- with a surprising, life-like quality, even though he's not been to the ocean to see them in their natural state. His eight-year-old sister, Aqura, is fascinated by totems of African and Native American origin and constructed elaborate tower and animal sculptures. The siblings live a few blocks from the hospital and attended *Safe Harbor* workshops all summer long, assisting the artist in training new participants while expanding their own artistic skills. For both children, art has become an essential means of expression. As Billy describes, "It's a way to make my ideas real...art is something I'll do my whole life long."



healing sustenance refuge understanding compassion love prosperity delight

Roberto Evans

A trained musician, Roberto Evans, Temple Children's Patient Liaison, is fluent in the expressions of an intangible medium. When he began to design a milagro, however, he was unsure how to create something "outside of myself, tactile." Then Roberto remembered the words of his father: "It isn't so important how smart you are, but how well you do with people -- how smart your heart is." So he sculpted a heart. "I thought of people who make up my heart, people no longer with us but who I carry with me in my heart," Roberto explained. "My dad, my aunt, my grandmother, my best friend...I put their initials in all different parts of the heart....I mean when does it ever happen, when can you ever have your feelings be tangible in something? Looking at it has been a little process every day, a reminder, and in giving it up I share...the tangible representation of people who I love with other people....Art has to be a functional part of the community and that's what this has been for me, very healthy, very therapeutic."



Bill Talley

Bill Talley proudly displayed his milagros: a miniature two-story house and a burgeoning bouquet of fresh flowers. "A new home would really mean a fresh start," he explained, "and flowers show everyone your love." This former Temple University Hospital cancer patient and five year survivor truly feels as though he's been given a new opportunity for life, and hopes to purchase a house this year. Bill's intricately crafted artworks demonstrate his commitment to show his love and concern for his neighborhood and city, as well. A life-long North Philadelphia resident, Bill acts as a community liaison for COSACOSA.



Michaela Healy

Michaela Healy cradled her ladybug milagro. "Whenever you see a ladybug," she advised, "don't catch it, let it go." Four-year-old Michaela, who already has had seventy-two operations for a congenital condition, recently lost her nine-year-old friend Briana to leukemia. Before she died, Briana dreamt that another friend who had passed away would return for her as a ladybug. The two of them would fly to heaven together. Now every time Michaela sees a ladybug, to her it's Briana come to say hello and "don't be scared." Michaela selected a special place for her milagro on the *Safe Harbor* sculpture and looks forward to visiting the ladybug each time she's at the hospital.

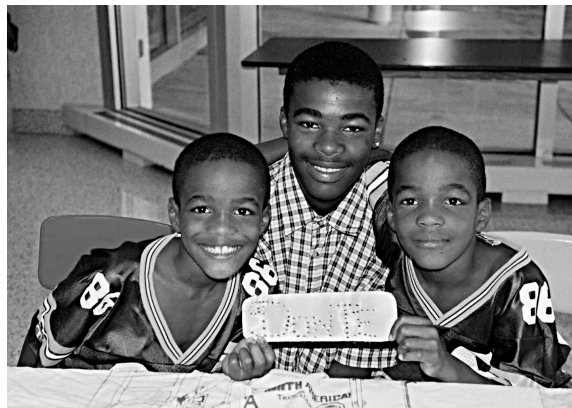
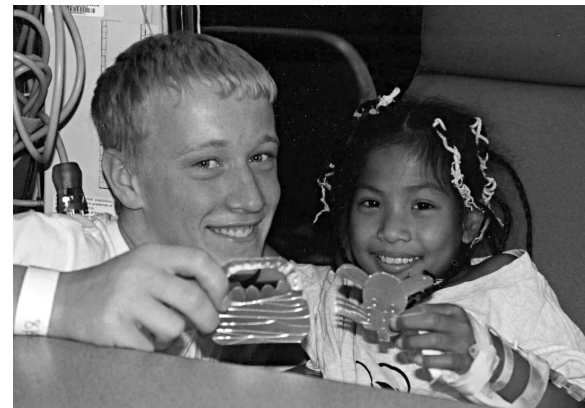
Eudora and Myles Wiggins

Eudora Wiggins is passionate about children. As a Special Education teacher for the School District of Philadelphia, she developed numerous creative ways to assist children with unique needs. "I've always been interested in Mayan art and history," she declared. That interest suffused her milagros -- joyful, ancient designs of dancing animals and people. She elicited the same rousing enthusiasm from her students at Camp Substance, a brand-new summer program based near the hospital. By inspiring her young campers, including her grandson, Myles, Eudora truly makes miracles (*milagros*) wherever she goes.



Julie and Joe Schatz

"Candy! I just love candy!" exclaimed eleven-year-old Julie Schatz from her room at Temple Children's Medical Center. For her milagro, Julie expressed her sweet tooth by creating an Easter Bunny, even though, she admitted, "It really isn't the time of year." She also cajoled her older brother, Joe, into fabricating a matching basket filled with eggs (chocolate, no doubt!).

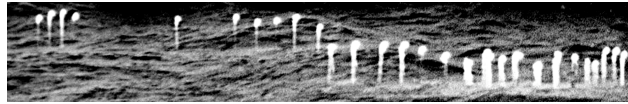


Donte, Denary, and Darnell Wilkins

In every action, "I just try to be artistic," fourteen-year-old Donte Wilkins explains. While making milagros, "I was thinking of a picture that I was going to start drawing...people with jewelry on.... [The milagros] became models for what I wanted to see." Donte often works with his father, an accomplished artist. He is proud, in turn, to be a role model for his eight-year-old twin brothers, Denary and Darnell, who also like to draw. The three brothers attended *Safe Harbor* workshops together all summer long. Since 1999, Donte has assisted with COSACOSA's Healing Art Project by instructing younger participants. His final milagro of the summer was a name plate; he announces, "It's like signing your work -- the ultimate signing."

healing sustenance refuge understanding compassion love prosperity delight

healing sustenance refuge understanding compassion love prosperity delight



The Artist

Balance. Union. Transformation. In the work of *Safe Harbor* artist Pedro Ospina, titles offer maps of concepts for the viewer to explore. Once engaged, however, we find no easy road to enlightenment. Instead, Ospina immerses us in the fluid nature of identity and place.

Ospina's work as an artist explores the human search for belonging in the face of societal barriers and cultural change. *Balance*, an early work incorporating milagros, is a mixed media altar to self-definition. The central figure appears to be rising, balanced amid the steely tokens of its life aspirations, yet covered with colorful blossoms. At the body's center rests a silvery heart, exposed beneath its open, metallic petals. Ospina's question is immediate: are we each, at the core, the sum of our accomplishments and expectations, or is something more transcendent unfolding within us?

In order to better communicate issues of assimilation and dissent, Ospina has redefined disciplinary boundaries many times. Trained as a printmaker, his visual vocabulary has grown to include photography, painting, sculpture, and multi-media installation. Authentic contact with multiple cultures and value systems also defines the technique and content of his work. While living with stone artisans in Chiapas, Mexico, Ospina created a comprehensive series of carvings using only the traditional tools of the region, which he constructed himself. These works, including *Union*, intertwine simple polar elements: dark and light, night and day, angle and curve, male and female. The "union" of these opposites forms an intricate connection as well as a tenuous one -- not a true merger, but a tenacious cohesion born more of necessity than desire.

Such frailty is magnified in much of Ospina's later work. He refers to his wood and plant substrate sculptures as "investigations of fragility and permanence," listing "tension" as a recurring material. *Bound Pressure*, boxed wood shards, and *Energy*, projected reeds and rods, are prime examples of the artist's constrained intensity. The metaphoric sophistication of these works lies in how they incite the viewer to comprehend their unspoken message: we must capture tension, transform it, and use it for our own ends.

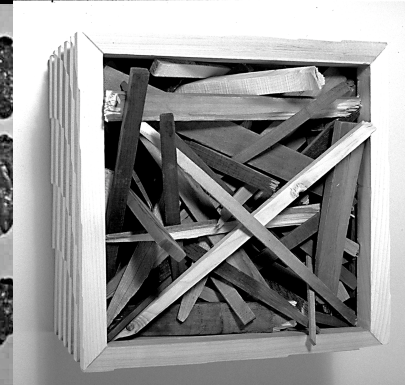
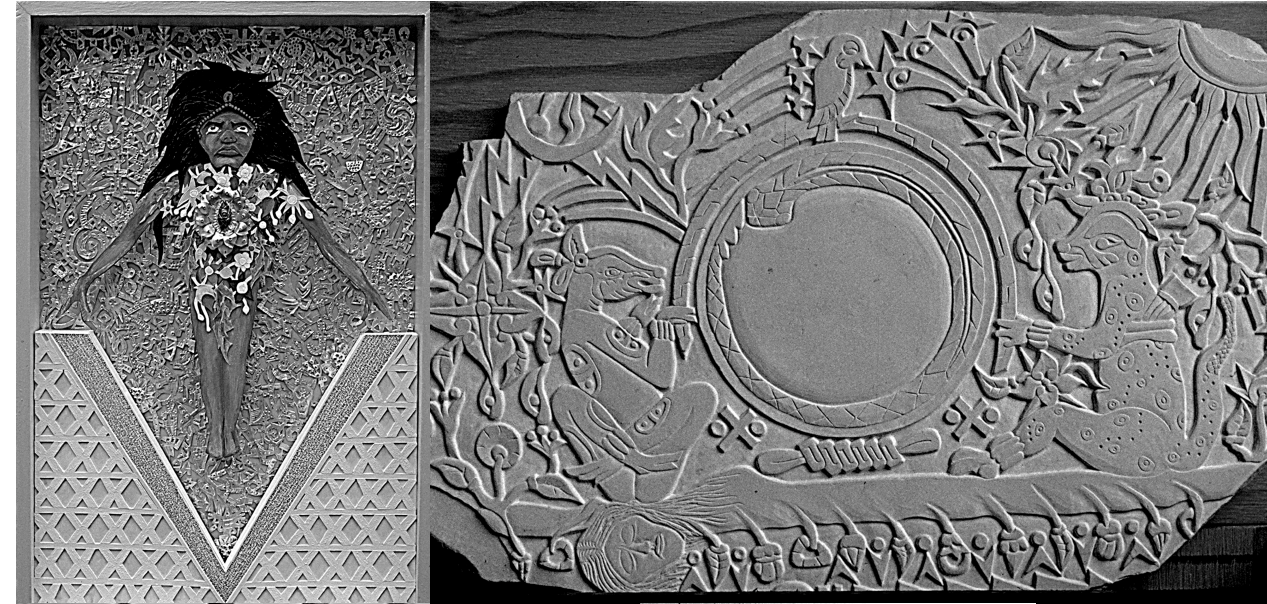
As a ceramist, Ospina collects and incorporates diverse social histories and healing practices in his work. He conveys, in a very personal way, ideas he finds relevant to the

cultural survival of the communities he encounters. *Almas/Souls*, a cluster of ninety ceramic vessels, is a physical manifestation of an otherwise inexpressible psychic state -- the curative spirit journey. This shamanistic rite, widely practiced from Ospina's native Colombia to India (where he has travelled extensively), maintains that an individual consciousness may wander from the body; battle those afflictions, temptations, or obstacles which have remained unconscious; and be healed. In Ospina's work, a common psychosocial mythology -- the sameness of vessels which are, in fact, unique -- holds the efficacy of the cure.

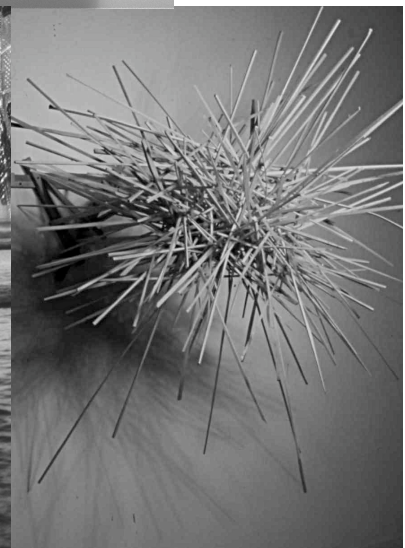
Ospina is the co-founder of Casa de Cultura Santa Teresa in Sao Paolo, Brazil, a multi-disciplinary arts center providing artist residencies, workshops, and symposia. Like COSACOSA, Casa de Cultura's work centers on rediscovering the original role of the artist as a community leader. One essential function is the celebration of holidays, holy days, and community events. Ospina documents these Brazilian festivals in black and white photography. In *Apparecida* (on the cover) and *Transformación*, people become compositional elements defined by the artist's context, real or imagined. Fire lights on water; spirits are called. We walk into the ocean, metamorphose, and fly. As in all of his work, Ospina attempts to uncover the nature of individual reality outside social boundaries and beyond cultural displacement.

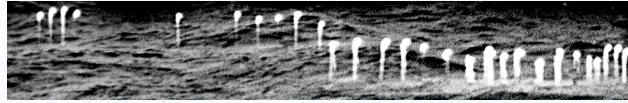
A recipient of grants from the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Ospina's work has been featured in Philadelphia venues including the African-American Museum, Nexus, the Painted Bride Art Center, Taller Puertorriqueño, and the University of the Arts. He has been an artist in residence throughout the United States and abroad, at centers including El Museo del Barrio (New York City), Headlands Center for the Arts, Mission Cultural Center (San Francisco), Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the Wales Visual Arts Exchange. As an arts educator, he has taught at the American School in Brazil, and locally at Aspira, Prints in Progress, and Taller Puertorriqueño. Ospina holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking from SUNY Purchase and a Master of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Art from Maryland Institute College of Art.

Pedro Ospina dedicates the Safe Harbor sculpture to Isabela.



Multidisciplinary works by Pedro Ospina (clockwise from top left):
Balance, mixed media, 20" x 30", 1992.
Union, stone carving, 16" x 10", 1989.
Bound Pressure, wood and tension, 4' x 4' x 1', 1997.
Energy, plant substrates and tension, 55" x 63" x 22", 1997.
Transformación, performative photography, 2001.
Alma/Souls, ceramic vessels (detail), 16' x 9' x 12", 1998.





COSACOSA art at large

Founded in 1990, COSACOSA art at large, Inc. creates new art specific to Philadelphia neighborhoods and public spaces. Through art workshops, artist commissions, and media projects, we enable dialogues among our city's diverse cultures and communities. COSACOSA projects affirm the arts as a venue through which city residents encounter, establish, and redefine their cultural identities; assure a sense of equality among all cultures; and build participation in their communities as well as in society-at-large.

interaction COSACOSA art workshops engage children and adults from different backgrounds to create a common project. Each workshop identifies a community theme to explore through one of many possible artistic disciplines, from painting to theater, from quilt-making to ceramics. Since 1991, COSACOSA has brought together thousands of citizens from over thirty Philadelphia neighborhoods to learn about art, about each other, and about how to work together. As our participants grow in responsibility and cooperative skills, their community -- our city -- grows with them.

interpretation COSACOSA artist commissions and media projects expand upon ideas evolved in our public workshops. Again, our approach is multi-disciplinary, from tile mosaics for a school to interactive sculpture for a hospital, from audio work examining changing city neighborhoods to theatrical journeys through Philadelphia's public monuments filmed for the Smithsonian Institution. COSACOSA interpretive projects provoke accessible, insightful dialogues, while building collaborative forums in which to address the common and uncommon challenges of living together.

COSACOSA continues to design and apply new models to deliver innovative and interactive "dialogues through art" directly into Philadelphia neighborhoods. For more information about COSACOSA, and to learn how to participate in our programs, please visit our website at www.cosacosa.org.

SafeHarbor Staff

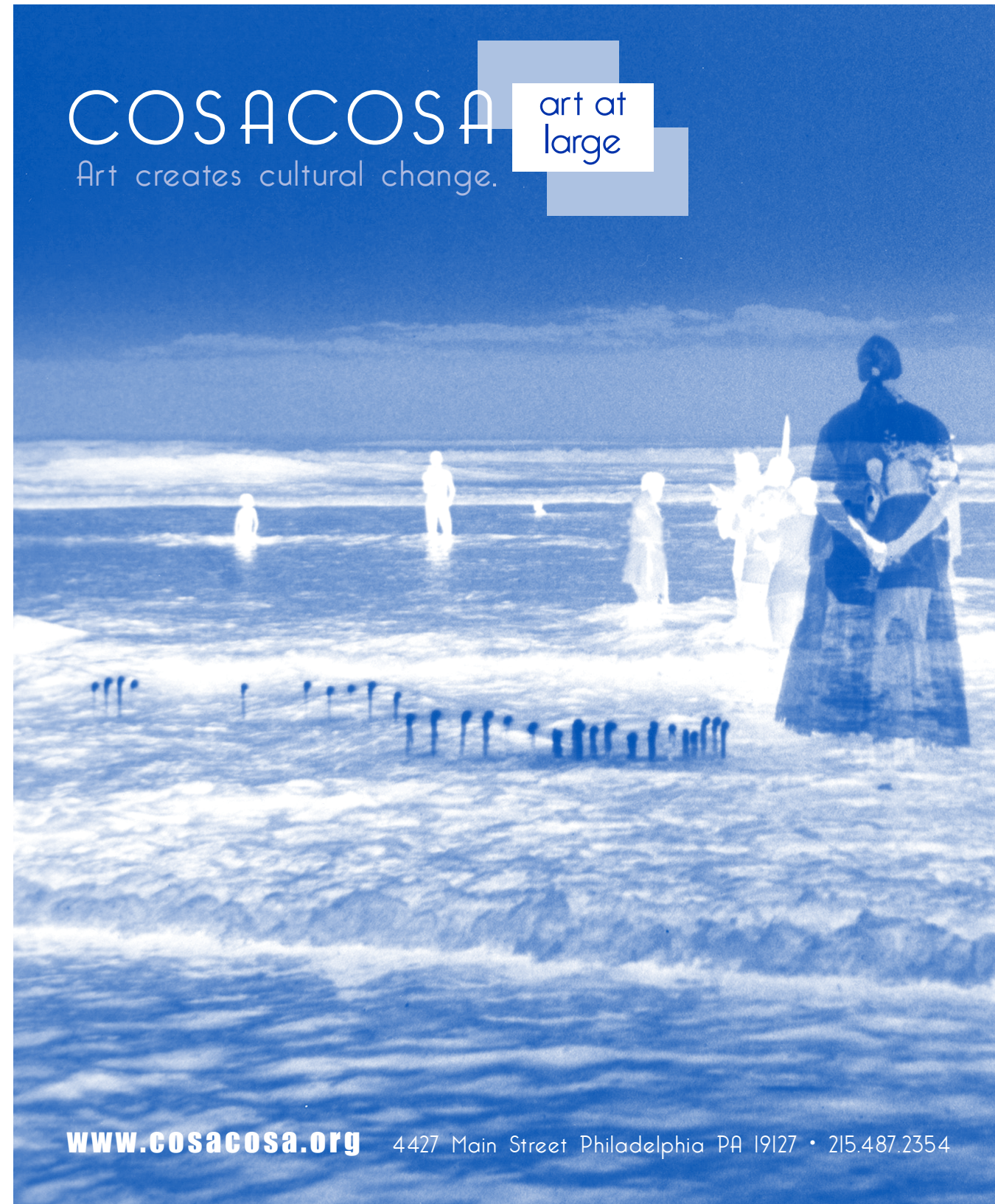
Director
Program Associate
Editorial Associate
Technical Manager
Associate Hospital Director, TUCMC
Child Life Clinical Manager, TUCMC
Community Outreach Coordinators, TUCMC

Public Relations Associate, TUCMC
Publication Design Development

Kimberly Niemela
Betsy Leschinsky
Miriam Seidel
Philip Tang
Lynn Gallagher-Ford
Joelle Garnick
Siomara Lopez
Elisha B. Morris
Jennifer McGowen
Smart Cookie Design

COSACOSA
Art creates cultural change.

art at
large



www.cosacosa.org 4427 Main Street Philadelphia PA 19127 • 215.487.2354