

# Kluger Kaplan's Miami Office a Museum of Contemporary Art

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Miami attorney Alan Kluger has turned his law office into an art museum with renowned contemporary Latin American paintings, sculpture and photography.

While displaying art in law offices is nothing new, Kluger's collection is so impressive that it's like a retrospective art show unto itself.

He has plans to open the office of Kluger, Kaplan, Silverman, Katzen & Levine on weekends to tour groups, targeting family members of those in Miami to attend various conventions. Kluger is already contacting nearby hotels.

"We are going to train lawyers and their spouses to be docents and give tours of the art collection," he said.

Kluger knows the story behind many of the pieces by the likes of Arnaldo Roche of Puerto Rico, Alfredo Jaar of Chile, Carlos Contente of Brazil, Fernando Canovas

of Argentina, and Jose Bedia, Esterio Segura and Lilian Garcia-Roig of Cuba.

During an interview this week, Kluger pointed to a sculpture by Segura called "Noticias Que Me Llegan Desde Dentro," a 2000 piece with a wire frame in the shape of man filled with audio speakers.

"These are speakers from the old days of communists when (Cuba President) Fidel (Castro) was running through the streets speaking on them," Kluger said. "Here is the Cuban man in communist Cuba. He has no independent thought. He basically is and thinks what they tell him."

The law firm recently moved up 10 floors in the Miami Center to the former gilded space on the 27th floor once occupied by R. Allen Stanford's office before the billionaire's Ponzi scheme went belly up.



J. ALBERT DIAZ

Miami attorney Alan Kluger shows off a sculpture by Esterio Segura called "Noticias Que Me Llegan Desde Dentro." [See slide show on www.dailybusinessreview.com.](http://www.dailybusinessreview.com)

Kluger wanted to utilize his estimated 300-piece art collection to inspire his 28 attorneys and support staff.

A large triptych "Hoy," Spanish for "today," by Cuban artist Douglas Arguelles, greets all who enter the 24,133-square-foot space.

"But it means more than 'today' in Spanish. What it really means is 'now,'" Kluger said. "We thought it makes a good entrance for

the law firm."

Each piece has a plaque with the name of the artist and the piece. He plans to add QR codes to give information about the piece when scanned by a smart phone.

## CONTEMPORARY EMPHASIS

Kluger has been collecting Latin American art with his wife, Amy Dean, for decades, starting with

muralists like Diego Rivera. They then started to become friends with emerging artists. The couple's collection is purely contemporary now from established as well as emerging artists.

"It starts in 1955 and goes up to Thursday," Kluger quips.

He said he asks himself with every piece if first he likes it and then if he can afford it. He no longer worries if he has the space. "In collecting, the hunt is fun," Kluger said.

Sculptures include "La Prensa II" by Cuban exile Angel Delgado, who placed stacks of newspapers on paraffin wax heads to represent the crushing deluge of information in the media age.

Kluger owns pieces by every artist in the collective dubbed the Miami Group, which established themselves in the city's art districts. At the law office, Kluger displays "Rehab II" by Diego Singh, a member of the Miami Group.

Kluger notes some of the most important contemporary art right now is coming from Brazil and artists born in Cuba.

But his interest isn't just collecting.

He also represented the board at the Miami Museum of Contemporary Art in a legal showdown with the city of North Miami. Much of that collection now resides at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Miami's Design District.

#### 'RAPE OF HAITI'

Make no mistake: Kluger's collection could rival a museum show with its diversity in style and breadth. The pieces range from hyperrealism, to collages to multimedia.

Many are political in nature, such as "Vision in Green," an acrylic mixed-media piece by Haitian artist Edouard Duval-Carrie that depicts a woman in a headdress in a sea of yellow.

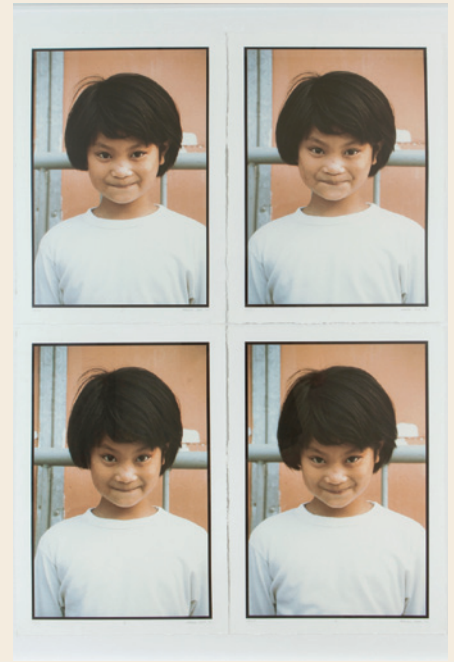
Kluger explains the painting depicts the rape of Haiti from the elaborate frame, representing French colonialism, to leprosy on a figure symbolizing the diseases brought to the West Indies by Europeans.

There are other political pieces, such as "One Hundred Times Nguyen," a series of photographs of a smiling 11-year-old Vietnamese refugee to juxtapose innocence and purity in defiance of her circumstance.

Others are more personal to the artist, but Kluger knows the fascinating background of each one.

He explains how Emilio Perez's "Mister Twister" was made by the Cuban-American artist, stripping away six layers of paint with razors.

Or the heartbreak ren-



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"One Hundred Times Nguyen" shows a series of photos of a smiling 11-year-old Vietnamese refugee.

dered by Roche, an esteemed Puerto Rican artist, in the impressionistic "Lies and Paradise" from 2004. The piece depicts the artist and Vincent Van Gogh cupping an easel in a feast of translucent blues.

"The reason he uses Van Gogh is that his brother was a schizophrenic and in an episode choked his sister, his own twin sister, who was an artist as well," Kluger said. "In the opinion of many, he (Roche) is the greatest living Latin American artist."

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"Lies and Paradise" depicts artist Arnaldo Roche of Puerto Rico and Vincent Van Gogh cupping an easel in translucent blues.