**Héctor Gallo Portieles**

**Havana, 1924**

Héctor Gallo Portieles (Gallo) is the sixth and last son of Rosa, 47-year-old woman and Antonio, mayor of Campo Florido town. In 1936 the political tide changed and his father is deposed of the governorship so the family was without any financial support. That is when Gallo is forced to begin to work with hardly 12 years old learning the barber’s trade. Just before the Cuban revolution triumph in 1959, he became a member of the clandestine fight and months after the victory he was summoned by the newly-form government’s high commands to occupy a diplomat’s position. They send him to Paraguay as commercial representative although in fact he goes as a secret security agent. Hereafter, this humble barber and semi-illiterate, as he described himself, traveled more than 20 countries. At the beginning of 1980 while he was an ambassador in Cambodia he finished journalism. He was 58 years old and he alternated his diplomatic work with lecturers and his writer’s career. After his retirement and amid the difficult economic situation in Cuba caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist European countries at the beginning of 1990, his pension was not enough to eat. He was forced to change his big and comfortable apartment in the central area in Vedado, in the capital, for a small apartment in the neighborhood of Alamar, in the outskirts of Havana. When he was 65 years old and without any motivation to live, beyond his only and forever wife’s company, he reborn wholeheartedly devoting himself to art. He began to pick up abandoned objects that came into disuse, the remains of daily life that appear particularly interesting for him, in all forms and sizes. Some of these objects were planted by him in the garden of his apartment, giving them, this way, a second life. A primitive allegory which gradually with its evolution, put together other works that eventually piled up. That’s how rose *“El Jardín de los Afectos”* (Spanish expression for: The Affections Garden). The smaller objects, transformed and crowded together by his genius and creativity, he decided to put them inside the house, in *“La Galeria”* (Spanish expression for: The Gallery), as he calls it. The Garden and Gallery are the two complementary parts of his *“Museo de los Afectos”* (Spanish expression for: Museum of Affections). At the time, the whole garden, adjacent sidewalks and literally each corner of his apartment were filled with incredible objects of all kind. Moved by his sincerity and his determination, people from the neighborhood began to see his work through different eyes and to feel the Museum of Affections like an own and autochthonous space. Some of the neighbors also bring him their old objects hoping he probably makes something special with them. His work is marked by the conscience of an implacable law: the life is not but a permanent transformation of the matter and that is what makes it eternal. *(It were used fragments of Vincent Rea’s texts for the book: Gallo, an Art Brut Project’s publication, 2014).*

**Exhibitions**

2014. Echoes from unconsciousness. Spanish Embassy at Cuba. Havana, Cuba.

2014. The World of Gallo. House for Poetry. Havana, Cuba.