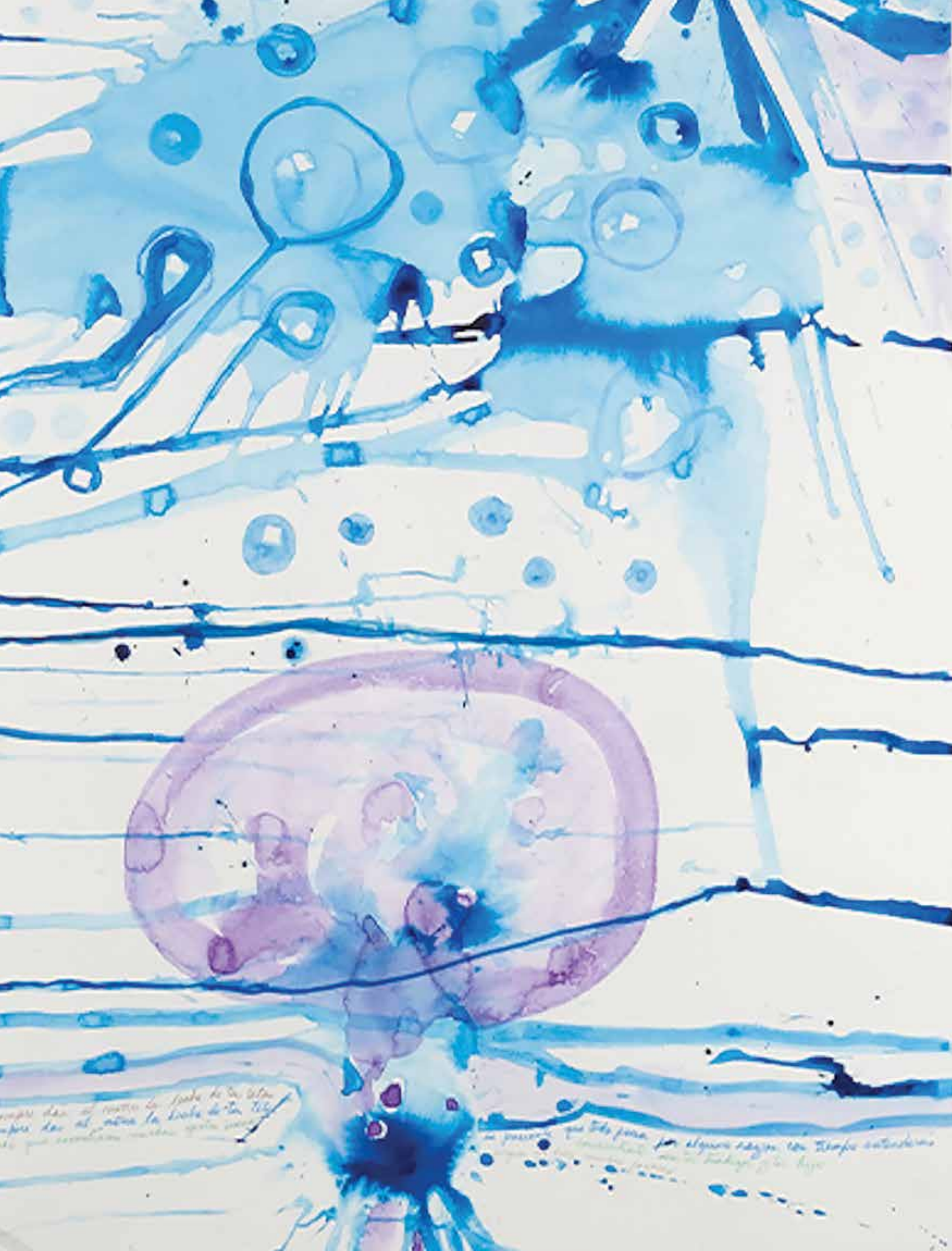


# CARIBBEAN



# TRANSITIONS



siempre das al viento la parte de tu alma  
siempre das al viento la parte de tu alma  
siempre das al viento la parte de tu alma

no puedes que todo para por algunos días con tiempo entendiendo  
la vida que todo para por algunos días con tiempo entendiendo  
la vida que todo para por algunos días con tiempo entendiendo

# CARIBBEAN TRANSITIONS

June 11 – August 7, 2022

American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center

Washington, DC

Curated by Keith Morrison



# AN EXPANDING VISION OF THE AMERICAS: A FOREWORD TO THE EXHIBITION

By Anna Arabindan-Kesson

Organizing an exhibition that pushes against the geographical limits, in which the United States comes to define the word “America,” poses a necessary challenge: What does it mean to think hemispherically? *Caribbean Transitions* begins with this question—and answers it—by situating the Caribbean as the historic fulcrum of the culture of the Americas. From this starting point, the exhibition brings together a wide range of artists, working across a range of media, to explore the multilayered relationships connecting the Caribbean and the United States, in an expansive international context.

The Caribbean is often envisioned as a site of convergence, a point of intersection, a space of diffusion, a crossroads. These are attempts to describe the kind of reorientation that the Caribbean has, historically, called for. To study, to live in, to know the Caribbean is to also move beyond the limited constructions of national boundaries, and its historical and linguistic genealogies. Even before the rupture brought about by the colonial genocide of Indigenous communities, and the introduction of enslaved Africans to the region, the Caribbean has been part of a circulating network of ideas, goods, and people within the Americas: a place where mobility and localized experience were never disparate. While it is increasingly true that these relational histories have become the basis for the assertion of national narratives (“out of many one”), within the Caribbean, itself, these histories still remind us that the Caribbean, and Caribbean art, call for a different way of thinking, a different mode of working, a different way of being.

*Caribbean Transitions* sets out to emphasize this relationality as a central component of the practice of contemporary artists from the Caribbean. It considers how artists restage and mine the embodied practices of the Caribbean festival arts, cultural practices that visualize the entangled histories of Indigenous and Black communities, and track their continued intimacies across the Americas, as people and performances move. These historical circuits offer artists opportunities to explore contemporary issues of migration, mobility and belonging in the Americas. Alongside these are explorations of identity and becoming that are in dialogue with explorations of the contemporary practices of extraction and commodification —processes that continue to shape,

and emerge from, the economic structures that bind, and divide, the Americas today.

The Caribbean—particularly in the United States—is often imagined and represented through the visual cultures of tourism, popular music, and fetishized violence. This exhibition offers an important reorientation to this view, and to the overemphasis on North America as the site of an “America.” Curated by one of the most significant Caribbean artists and art curators of our time, and beginning from the unique vantage point of looking from the Caribbean to the rest of the world, it is an exhibition that promises to challenge and disrupt these definitions by emphasizing the hemispheric connections, cultures, and movements that constitute the multiplicity of experiences that have always defined, and perhaps exceeded, the limits of the Americas.

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Opposite: Luis Cruz Azaceta, *January 6, Rampage & Insurrection*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.



# Caribbean Transitions

By Keith Morrison

The exhibition's purpose is to better recognize some of the sources and characters of art made by contemporary artists of Caribbean descent. The Caribbean was the fulcrum of the European invasion of what came to be called the Americas. It is a place of historical transitions, which continue today. The work of some of the best Caribbean artists reveals memories, social changes, and migratory experiences that I call "transitions." There are twenty artists in the show. Most were born in the Caribbean and migrated to the US. This essay focuses on the countries of the artists in the exhibition. Some were born in the US to Caribbean parents, and others live in the Caribbean. All exhibit internationally. They come from Cuba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago, and the US. They are painters, printmakers, photographers, video-makers, installation and performance artists.

The Caribbean is a cultural region that extends beyond the islands in the Caribbean Sea to parts of the South American mainland territories of Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana. Four European language groups are spoken in the Caribbean: English, Spanish, French, and Dutch. They speak African-based Creole languages, as well. The Caribbean is known for fine beaches and tourism. And, indeed, much of the Caribbean's economy comes from tourism. However, that is not the culture of the Caribbean. The general culture of the Caribbean comes primarily from its African slave heritage, and European, Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern immigration. The indigenous Amerindian population is virtually extinct in most of the Caribbean.

The first newcomers were Europeans, who came for conquest, exploitation and wealth. Africans, Indians, Chinese, and most others came, by force or voluntarily, to labor. Perhaps many of this latter group think of the sea as a passage of trauma, even if only subliminally. They think of

the land, even if they may have come to love it, as a place far away from home. Whereas in the US, for example, land and space would have seemed infinite; in the Caribbean, it would have seemed limited, even if lucrative to the ruling class. To the enslaved, it was a prison. The people of the Caribbean, historical subjects of European powers, are free nations today. They have many differences but share many things, as well. They share memories of other lands and cultures. They share the experience of being transplanted, enslaved, forced to labor and to struggle for independence, creating hybrid cultures and religions, and a historic and continuing migration in body and spirit.

The first settlers of the Caribbean were different peoples called Amerindians. Christopher Columbus, who made three voyages to the Caribbean, falsely identified the people he saw as "Indians." The name stuck. The first Amerindians were the Casimiroid people, from about 4190 to 2165 BCE. The Ortoiroid came from the Orinoco Valley in South America, and those who were called Arawaks migrated to the Caribbean in about 2000 BCE. There were two different Arawaks: the Taíno and the Carib. Other people were there, too, especially in Cuba (e.g., Ciboneyes and the Guanahatabeyes). It's not certain if these others came there from what is now South America or from Florida. The Caribs migrated to the Eastern Caribbean, and the Taínos to the Western Caribbean. The Spanish plundered and enslaved the native Taíno, who died out from Spanish extermination, labor, suicide, and European diseases: predominantly influenza, and others such as gonorrhea and syphilis. Europeans replaced the Taínos with enslaved Africans. Following decades of disastrous slave revolts in Jamaica, the British ended slavery with their Slavery Abolition Act in 1833. Other European colonists followed grudgingly: Holland in Curaçao in 1863, Spain in Cuba in 1873, and Puerto in 1886. The US ended slavery in 1865.

Opposite: Paul Anthony Smith, *Midnight Blue #2*, 2020–21. Unique picotage with oil sticks, acrylic gouache and spray paint mounted on museum board and sintra panel, 96 x 72 x 1.125 in. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

When they ended slavery, the British brought prisoners and indentured servants from India and China for cheap labor.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, the Spanish used enslaved people to plunder the Caribbean for gold, other minerals, tobacco, sugar, banana, and indigo. The British and French followed suit, as did the Dutch. In the British Caribbean in about the early eighteenth century, Jews, those of certain Christian denominations, and Lebanese fled to the Caribbean to escape religious and political persecution. Descendants of Africans, European, Middle Eastern, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, and South Asian people have mixed in the Caribbean resulting in biracial people. Europeans, who controlled the land, structured the Caribbean for exploitation and trade, and as a station for human cargo. Caribbean artists have created images with expressions and symbols of identity, such as banana, tobacco, indigo, and sugarcane. They have also made maps of their countries like symbols of historic imprisonment. Others make art about the flora, fauna, mountains, and the Caribbean Sea.

All four of the European language groups of the Caribbean (noted above) are represented in this exhibition. However, the mixture of Caribbean people and languages has been fluid. Local languages of the Caribbean are spoken by the masses of poor people, and often no less so by others, including Europeans. For example, Haitian Creole, the local common language, is substantially different from French. Although Dutch is the official language of Curaçao, everyone speaks Papiamentu, which is a mixture of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and African languages. And in Jamaica, where English is the official and commonly used language, everybody also speaks Patois. Patois, a mix of African languages and English, is also written. The Spanish were the first occupants of the Caribbean, with the invasion of Columbus in 1492. The Spanish controlled all the Caribbean in the sixteenth century, then lost some of it to other European countries. Today, most of the Caribbean is made up of sovereign nations with European languages. Spanish is spoken in Cuba, Domini-

can Republic, and Puerto Rico, while they speak French in Haiti.

The history of these countries is complicated. Spain occupied Jamaica for 150 years before England took it from them. Haiti, through revolution, gained independence from France, but many Haitians fled to the neighboring Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Jamaica. Over the last two hundred years, Haitians have moved voluntarily, or by force, to the Dominican Republic and back to Haiti. Following slave revolts, the British government sent many enslaved people from Jamaica to other islands and to Nova Scotia. At different times, the Portuguese ruled Curaçao, then the British, and then the Dutch. The British occupied Cuba then swapped it with Spain for Florida. Even before the era of Fidel Castro, some Cubans fled dictators for Jamaica. And, of course, since Castro, many thousands more fled to the US. British colonials from such as from countries such as Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad migrated to dig the Panama Canal. Many have since moved back and forth from Panama to the Caribbean. Many Haitians have migrated to the US. And, of course, generations of Puerto Ricans, who are US citizens, have migrated back and forth from the island to the mainland for more than a century.

The Caribbean is commonly known for its mixture of people of African and European descent. In the early eighteenth century, Jews, and those of some Christian denominations, fled to the Caribbean to escape religious and political persecution. Between the middle and late nineteenth century, Lebanese and Syrians fled there to escape the Ottoman Empire. The earliest Jewish immigrants came with Columbus to Cuba in 1492. One of the oldest and best-preserved Jewish cemeteries in the Americas is in Jamaica. The Hope of Israel-Emanuel Synagogue (1730) in Willemstad, Curaçao, is the oldest synagogue in the Americas. Chinese people emigrated to Jamaica and Curaçao as British indentured servants. Chinese also migrated to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico in the nineteenth century. A small number of Japanese migrated to the Caribbean

in the nineteenth century, as well. The Caribbean, the gateway to the Americas, is the oldest American cultural melting pot. The Caribbean is, therefore, a mixture of races, formal and creole languages, and migrations. The Caribbean is historically the most multicultural region in all of the Americas. About 44 million people live in the Caribbean, and 9 million live abroad, including 4.4 million in the US.

## Taíno art

The Taínos made the earliest known art of the Caribbean. Typically, these are wood and rock carvings with bone, shell, and gold inlays. Most of the best ones are in European collections, but some are in Caribbean countries, mainly Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. They are called Zemis (spiritual gods). They include "The Birdman" found in Jamaica and "The Cotton Reliquary Zemi," which was found in the Dominican Republic.

## Carnival and Festival

Public multimedia performances, known as "Carnival," "Festival," and "Mardi Gras," are performed throughout the Caribbean, and on the mainland of North and South America. These are dramatic performances and costumed dances with spirituality and music.

The Spanish started Carnival in about 1510, in the part of the island of Hispaniola that is now the Dominican Republic. It is a springtime celebration of Catholic traditions around the Feast of the Epiphany at the beginning of Lent. Carnival, also performed in Trinidad and Tobago, and in Brazil, is not unlike Mardi Gras (i.e. Fat Tuesday) in New Orleans. Over time, Carnival included folklore, African drumming, steel bands, calypso, opera, and symphonic musical structure. Carnival is also called Masquerade in Trinidad and Tobago, which they shorten to Mas. French settlers brought Fat Tuesday to the region in the late eighteenth century. Mas is highly competitive, with groups of trained performers vying for recognition as the best of the Carnival.

Festivals emerged as pageants by enslaved people to entertain themselves. Many people believe that the modern Caribbean Festival began in Trinidad and Tobago in the eighteenth century. However, enslaved people created improvised performances almost four hundred years ago when masters granted them a few vacation days, usually at Christmas. Such Caribbean celebrations are known as *Junkanoo* or Masquerade in Jamaica; *John Canoe* in Belize; and Masquerade in the Dominican Republic (where there are many other pageantries throughout the year). These Caribbean pageants include African-based religious ceremonies such as *Vodun* in Haiti; *Pocomania* and *Kumina* in Jamaica; *Santería* in Cuba; *Orisha* and *Shango* in Trinidad and Granada; and *Kele* in St. Lucia. Festival expanded in scope and concept well beyond its African impetus, and came to include Christian imagery, as those in Protestant and Catholic faiths. Like Carnival, Festival includes different dance forms, instrumental music, and theatrical performances, such as Shakespearean dramas. Indentured Hindu and Muslim people from India to the Caribbean (1838–1917) joined the Festivals, and added Horary ceremonies. And between 1853–1879, some eighteen thousand Chinese indentured immigrants also entered the Caribbean labor force and added Chinese imagery to the celebrations.

Caribbean Carnivals and Festivals are also performed in the US, Canada, and the UK. These celebrations combine multiple cultures and races. They began from memories of African traditions, perhaps especially Yoruba and the Kongo ceremonies. For example, like some Yoruba ceremonies, a vital part of Festivals are street audiences, who call and respond or dance along with the march of the performances. Festival is the indigenous performance art of the Americas. Festivals are highly disciplined, requiring months of preparation, in many cases, and logical structure. These performances are meticulously planned, with the participants having the leeway to improvise and make variations during the performances.

Caribbean Carnival and Festival are performances that were created from a gumbo of cultures that form a syncretism in Caribbean art. They are the essence of performance art. Performers dance to the tempo of drums, string and horn instruments. Performers, dressed in spectacular costumes as mythical creatures, dance through throngs of cheering or mock-jeering interactive crowds. Carnivals and Festivals include theater, costumes, music, visual art, and dance. Carnival and Festival form parts of the foundation of the work of some of the artists in this exhibition.

## Intuitive art

The late David Boxer (1946–2017), artist, curator, art historian, and director of the Jamaican National Gallery, called art by self-trained artists “Intuitive art.” Parallel to festival in the Caribbean is an Intuitive art. Some people consider Intuitive art to be a popular art, folk art, or naive art, rather than creations of art-trained artists working within a tradition. Like Festival, Intuitive art maintains African and multiethnic forms in the Caribbean. Thus, Caribbean art emerged in two tiers: Eurocentric traditions and Afro-Caribbean experiences. The common themes in Caribbean art include enslavement, exploitation, migration, mysticism, nature, politics, ritual, and spirituality. Enslaved people and their progeny created Caribbean art, and Asians, Europeans, and people from the Middle East added to it. Many excellent artists throughout the Caribbean are self-taught Intuitive artists, some becoming world famous. They have made objects, sculptures, paintings, and such. Most Caribbean self-taught artists do not identify as spiritualists, but many do. In Haiti, some intuitive artists express ideas of Vodun, and some are Vodun priests. Vodun, a vastly popular religion that combines African spirituality with Catholicism, is historically practiced by many Haitian artists.

People combined African religions with Baptist, Moravian, and Methodist spirituality to form native Revivalism in Jamaica. These churches had supported the enslaved, so it was natural that they inspired many Afro-Caribbean people.

The Afro churches of Zion and Pocomania combine African religious beliefs with some Christian beliefs. Notable is that singing, drumming, and music, in general, are an integral part of these local religions. It naturally follows that music and visual arts, and performance are united in these ceremonies. In Jamaica, Mallica Reynolds (1911–1989), called Kapo, a Revivalist bishop, performed before and while being an artist. He is one of the most successful spiritualist artists with Everald Brown (1917–2003) and Albert Artwell (1942–2018). Another Jamaican religion is Rastafarianism, which emerged in the 1930s.

Rastafarianism began as an inspiration from Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, called the Black Messiah, and the nation of Ethiopia Black Zion. Rastafarianism takes impetus from the Coptic Church. It is practiced widely in Jamaica and has strong proponents across the Caribbean and worldwide, including in Canada, the US, Central, South America, Europe, and Africa. Rastafarianism includes Judaic, Mesonic, and East Indian spiritual teachings, as well. In Korea and Japan, people make annual pilgrimages to Jamaica to worship. Rastafarianism associates religion with political issues, such as racial discrimination and oppression, and, so, was resisted in British-controlled Jamaica for decades before it became generally accepted in the 1960s. Obeah is an ancient West African mystical practice in Jamaica. Obeah is not a religion but a healing practice or punishment, with potions and herbs to promote good health or death. In Jamaica, Obeah is practiced in secret. It is also practiced on several other islands, including Trinidad and Tobago. Some Caribbean artists, perhaps mainly self-taught, reference Obeah in their work. But some trained artists do, too. The mysticism and magic of Obeah in Jamaica and other islands, passed down through generations of secret cults, infuse much of the art.

Santería and Vodun are religions with cosmogonies of deities and worship. For centuries, Cuban artists have studied and/or practiced Santería, which is a mixture of African spirituality and

Catholicism. Some explore Palo, also known as Palo Monte, and Las Reglas de Congo, an African diasporic religion developed in Cuba. It arose through syncretism between the traditional Kongo religion of Central Africa, the Roman Catholic form of Christianity, and Spiritism. Another is Abakuá, which originated in Nigeria, and protected the enslaved. Catholicism appealed to enslaved Africans, who adopted varying parts of it to their religions, with its history of ritual and pageantry. Santería, Vodun, and other religions inspired Magical Realism in the visual arts, but no less in music and literature.

## Western Art vs. Caribbean Art

Given that Europeans colonized the Caribbean, it is natural that Western art was the first art that the colonists made, and that others followed. Succeeding generations added non-Western imagery from their Caribbean experiences. As a result, the center of Caribbean art shifted to become a hybrid of European, African, Asian, and Middle Eastern influences.

## Origin of American Art

American art began 500 years ago in the Caribbean. It began with Taíno Art, Carnival, and Festival. Many of the threads of contemporary American art, such as improvisation, fetishism, symbolism, performance art, interactive art, multimedia, and multiculturalism, began in the Caribbean 100 years before the first English settlement on the mainland. Characteristics of this syncretic Caribbean art expanded to the northern mainland and proliferated with the cultures of the enslaved and the free to form what was to become American art.

## Countries and Artists

### CUBA

Before Columbus arrived in 1492, three different peoples inhabited the island: the Ciboneyes, the Guanahatabeyes, and the Taínos. The inhabitants called it “Cubanacan,” but over time the name was

shortened to Cuba. The Spanish appointed governors to rule what was called New Spain and the neighboring island of Hispaniola in 1762–63. The British briefly occupied Cuba before returning it to Spain in exchange for Florida. A series of rebellions during the nineteenth century failed to end Spanish rule and claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Cubans. However, the Spanish-American War resulted in Spanish withdrawal from the island in 1898. Following three and a half years of subsequent US military rule, Cuba gained formal independence in 1902. Cuba also gained significant economic development, but fell under the control of successive despotic dictators supported by the US. In 1959, Fidel Castro led a successful revolution, followed by US withdrawal and mass Cuban immigration to the US. Cuba then fell under Russian control until it lost Russian subsidy in 1991. The country has been politically and economically isolated from the US, but has gradually gained access to foreign commerce and travel.

Eurocentric art began in Cuba before the twentieth century when Cuban artists emulated European Art, especially Spanish art, and Catholicism. The San Alejandro Academy of Havana was founded in 1818 and is the oldest art school in the Caribbean. Some outstanding Cuban artists of the first half of the twentieth century are Carlos Enríquez (1900–1957), Mario Carreño (1913–1999), a Cuban-born Chilean artist (b1913, lived in Chile), and René Portocarrero (1912–1985). Many American artists worked in Cuba, including Alice Neal, who married Carlos Enríquez. Following the revolution, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara established Las Escuelas Nacionales de Arte to include indigenous Taíno art, African art, and new Cuban ideas in art. The architecture and environmental concept for this school were to be like an African village. Historians consider the buildings of Las Escuelas Nacionales de Arte to be among the most outstanding architectural achievements of the Cuban Revolution.

Afro-Cuban religion has informed the work of many artists. For example, Belkis Ayón (1967–1999) made prints of allegories from the



Luis Cruz Azaceta, *Crisis I*, 2020. Acrylic on canvas, 96 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.



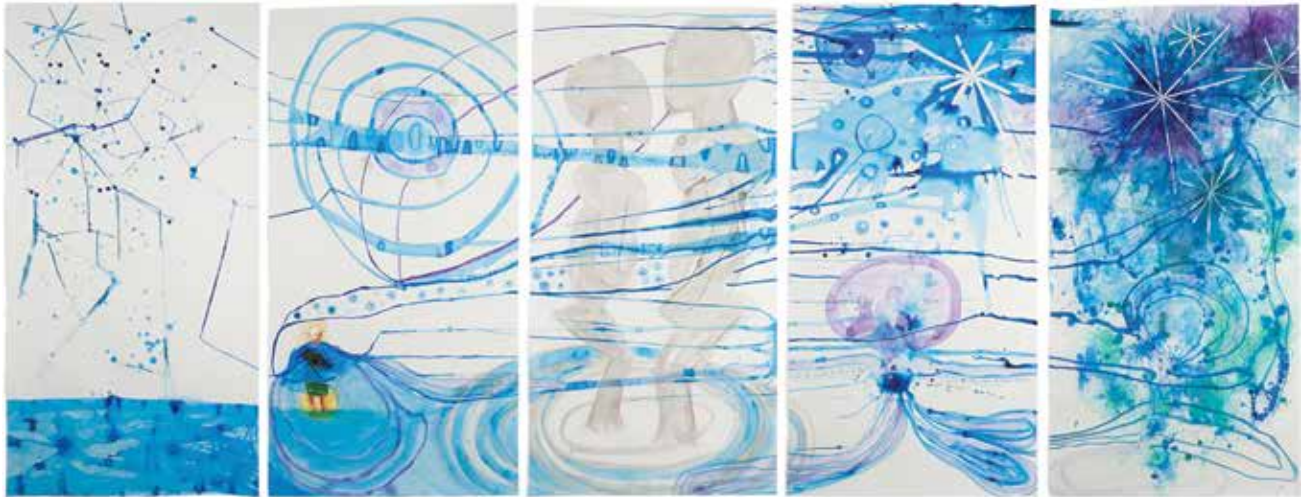
José Bedia, *Futil Esfuerzo del Procer Solo*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in. Jose Bedia Studio courtesy of Fredric Snitzer Gallery.

forementioned Abakuá, a secret, all-male Afro-Cuban mystical society. Manuel Mendive (b. 1944) was born into a Santería-practicing family. He is one of Cuba's best artists and he imbues his work with Santería symbols and meanings. He is a Santería priest, as well. Wifredo Lam (1902–1982) was among the first and was the most dominant Cuban artist to blend Western art and Afro-Cuban imagery. He augmented this imagery with symbols of slave labor, such as tobacco, banana, and sugarcane. Lam's father was Chinese, and his mother was African and European. He experienced Santería, Palo Monte and Abakuá as a child. Such practices were widespread in Cuba. Lam studied painting at the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Havana, and then in Madrid, Spain. He gained renown as a Surrealist in Europe over eighteen years before returning to Cuba in 1941. On the trip home with André Breton, he visited Martinique, where he met Aimé Césaire, whose ideas on Negritude affected him deeply. Lam was conscious of the African tradition and spirit throughout the Caribbean. He and Breton also traveled to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in 1941. In 1946, he and Breton traveled to Haiti, where Lam enriched his imagery with Vodun. Lam was an enormous influence on art in the Caribbean, infusing African imagery into European modernism to expand world art into a broader vision.

German art patrons and collectors Peter and Irene Ludwig created the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba in 1995 to promote the contemporary arts of Cuba. They established an important collection of Cuban art in Havana. The Ludwig Foundation of Cuba has provided opportunities for Cuban artists to exhibit locally and abroad. Many artists, students, and art museum personnel from the US, Germany, and other countries have worked with or studied at the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba. The Havana Biennial, the famous important art exhibition in the Caribbean, was established in 1984 and its first exhibition was of artists from Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the second Biennial of 1986, artists from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East have taken part.

**Luis Cruz Azaceta** (b. 1942, Cuba) came to the US in 1960. He makes paintings and prints about the human condition in times of crisis. His forms appear flat and in two-dimensional. His art process includes mixing painted surfaces, sometimes with commercial media and other media, such as Polaroids in his earlier work. His early work contained more explicit imagery of urban violence, the AIDS epidemic, and racism. His imagery is a gestalt of abstractions about disquiet in the world. In much of Azaceta's art, there is the theme of the individual deprived and reduced to forms with insect-like limbs and existing in a chaotic world.

Azaceta's art expresses hostility, war, terror-



María Magdalena Campos-Pons, *She Always Knew of the Space In-Between*, 2019. Gouache, watercolor, watercolor pencil, acrylic ink and a peacock feather on paper, 63 x 32 in. Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco.

ism, displacement, identity, collapsing economies, and contemporary events. His works are abstract images of oil rigs, satellites, mosques, explosions, and refugees. His painted surfaces are heavily textured and suggest physical and psychological burdens. His art addresses moral and ethical issues of peoples and nations worldwide in imagery that alludes to psychology and semiotics. He transforms the banal into the mystical. His art portrays starvation, deprivation, war, terrorism, displacement, immigration, identity, and collapsing economies. He paints satire of signs, toys, and electronics, which he transforms into mystical images in a kind of cyberspace. His art portrays abandonment, desolation, despair. His is a world of isolation of the displaced, of the deprived individual, and a resulting existential existence.

**José Bedia** (b. 1959, Cuba) studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Arts and the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana. Bedia became strongly influenced by Amerindian and Afro-Cuban ideas. And he became an initiate of Palo Monte, a Cuban religion believed to have evolved from the Congo in Africa. Some of his paintings include Afro-Cuban altars and Abakuá symbols of an Afro-Cuban men's initiatory fraternity in southeastern Nigeria and southwestern Cameroon. Bedia left Cuba in 1990 for Mexico, where he studied the art and culture of Indigenous people. He moved to the US in 1993. He lived among the Dakota Sioux and

learned much about their religion, cultural practices, and iconography.

Whereas earlier artists interpreted non-Western imagery, such as African art, to become harmonious with the evolution of Western art, Bedia sought a different approach. He lived in other cultures and learned their paths and intentions. From this knowledge, he makes art about what he has learned. He does not copy, but instead adds to ideas. As a result, his artistic vision synthesizes experience and interpretation. Bedia's art evokes a dialogue between Western art and other cultures. He distills his vast and complex cultural iconography into simplified imagery. His images are of cultural forms, layered with vestiges of civilizations, which he distills to become new iconic forms. His vision is of a universal iconography, synthesizing cultures, and reconstructing forms into images that reveal layers of human history. Deftly painted with reductive compositions, his paintings manifest as an essence of the human spirit. Bedia's art deconstructs and realigns cultures of the world, giving them parity. His art reveals the essence of the human soul through cultural parity.

**María Magdalena Campos-Pons** (b. 1959, Cuba) works in various media, including painting, printmaking, photography, performance, audiovisual media, and sculpture. Some of her art mines Cuban culture, gender, and sexuality.

She has explored her family's history of enslavement. She explores her multicultural identity, which is Afro-Cuban ancestry traced to Nigeria. Her art includes mysticism and the religious ritual of Santería. Her earlier work consists of grids of images of dissections of her body. She has made shaped canvases of fragmentation of herself. Some of her art is about the reproductive rights of women. In her work, the female body becomes a clinical icon of fertility.

Campos-Pons added sound to some of her pieces and included her voice. She made video installations, some of which were like totems, others like graveyards that archived her family's history. Her work became somewhat ethnographic, dissecting and charting her history. She expanded her work to include large-format photographs composed of diptychs, triptychs, or other arrangements. Her family's history has become a metaphor for Afro-Cuban history and beyond to the ethnographic account of the transatlantic slave trade.

Some of her recent works are abstractions that engage with the solar system, with signs and symbols like astrology that projects her history into a spiritual future. Campos-Pons's work is like a deconstruction of festival, which she dissects and reconstructs through history, sometimes referencing herself. The alternation between body and soul, and spirituality and culture, like a kaleidoscope of vision, sound, music, culture, and fertility, makes her paintings magical.

**Carlos Estévez** (b. 1969, Cuba) makes paintings, sculptures, and installations primarily composed of found objects, assemblages, and ceramics. He presents his works on the wall as paintings or relief sculptures. Estévez builds allegories of tension between microcosmic particles of life and how they may be reimagined to become large forms of life. The elements of his works are like particles of detritus and decomposition that are reassembled to appear as ecological transformation. His forms are like diagrams and dioramas of evolution.

Estévez's images are like x-ray visions of primordial forms of human, animal, mineral,



Carlos Estévez, *Portable Universe*, 2020. Wood, paper, string, and ribbon, variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist.

and mechanical phenomena. He creates his art like a surveyor with navigational instruments. The mechanism of watches, schematics, and cosmological charts, all elements that make our universe, life, and the cycles of nature, are parts of his art. Estévez's images are like excavations reassembled to document past and future times of human existence. In his works, the elements come together to create satirical or playful mannequins. They appear as excavations of humans, animals, plants, minerals, and materials. In many of his works, these images are laid out to form the human figure. Estévez's art portrays an evolution of life, natural and artificial, that results from human ingenuity and engineering.

**María Elena González's** (b. 1957, Cuba) art gathers inspiration and impetus from sound, flora,



María Elena González, *Vitrine (Capsule)*, 2017. Steel, glass, and porcelain, 72 x 24 x 24 in. Courtesy of the artist and Hirsch & Adler Modern, New York.

fauna, and landscape like those that characterize her native Caribbean environments. She explores themes such as identity, memory, and dislocation. She makes art in wood, porcelain, and synthetic concrete. Some of her works, called “Tree-Talk,” are multimedia projects in which she creates music for the player piano by transcribing markings on birch trees. “Tree-Talk” explores transitions

between the physical and the acoustic. González addresses the inherent sound of the materials and makes sounds from them for sculpture. Pushing the iconography of the “Tree Talk” series into new dimensions, the artist has more recently focused on the central component of the series, the player piano roll. Finding an aesthetic connection between the piano roll and the tree, González expanded her work to include their sonic relationship. She uses the player piano roll as an art object, but also as a companion to sound from the birch tree.

Some of her works are cast synthetic concrete that appear as player piano rolls—acting as keys of a xylophone or percussive sticks. The rolls alternate between representations of music and objects for performing music. González further plays with the idea of sound as a physical property by casting sculptural forms of the player piano roll itself, turning a musical “score” into a sculpture. Her work may function simultaneously as a sculpture and a musical instrument.

## CURAÇAO

Curaçao is a small island just forty miles off the Venezuelan coast. However, its history is as rich and important as any other in the Caribbean. Curaçao became strategically important because of its very large harbor at Willemstad, which facilitated the shipment of goods and storage and cargo of enslaved people to the Americas. Curaçao was also a base for Simón Bolívar and others fighting for the independence of South American states. After slavery, it maintained its importance for the military strategy of world powers, especially the Dutch, and for Venezuela as a station for Shell Oil Company. In more recent times, Curaçao has become a tourist destination, with luxury facilities and fine beaches for tourists on one part of the island. In contrast, the other part where native people live is dilapidated. The Curaçao painter Tony Monsanto has expressed dismay of Curaçao’s two-sided economy and neglect of its local population in satire. Curaçao’s internationally renowned artist Tirzo Martha confronts this

issue with exposure of its cruelty and with irony.

In Curaçao, people speak Dutch and Papiamentu. Papiamentu is an African-Spanish-Portuguese-English-based creole language spoken in Curaçao and other Dutch Caribbean islands. The history of Curaçao starts with settlement by the Arawak, an Amerindian people coming from the South American mainland. Arawaks inhabited the island for many hundreds of years before the arrival of Europeans. Alonso de Ojeda, explorer and conquistador, colonized Curaçao in 1499. At that time, about two thousand Amerindians lived on the island. By 1515, almost all Amerindians were enslaved and taken away to Hispaniola. The Spanish settled on the island in 1527 and governed it from one of the Spanish-Venezuelan cities. The Netherlands effectively separated from Spain in 1581, and Curaçao came under Dutch sovereignty. The Dutch West India Company (WIC), chartered in 1621, governed the island. Over time, Curaçao proved its value for the WIC. After the loss of Dutch Brazil in 1654, Curaçao became increasingly important. The favorable geographical position and large harbor made it valuable to trade with Europe, Venezuela, and other Caribbean islands.

Sephardic Jews came from the Netherlands and then-Dutch Brazil to Curaçao in the seventeenth century and have had a significant influence on the culture and economy of the island. Curaçao was home to the oldest active Jewish congregation in New Amsterdam (today's New York City) in 1651. The Jewish community of Curaçao also played a crucial role in supporting early Jewish congregations in New Amsterdam. In the 1920s and early 1930s, Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe came to Curaçao. Most of whom attained great wealth. Many Ashkenazi Jews left the island in the 1980s to settle elsewhere, especially in the United States. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the primary wealth of the island was from the transatlantic slave trade. Enslaved people brought from Africa were sold on the docks in Willemstad to Central and South America. The WIC sold enslaved people at very

competitive prices and thus drove most English, French, and Portuguese traders out of the market. Europeans kept a small number of enslaved Africans permanently on Curaçao. Control of the island changed many times in the nineteenth century. England invaded it twice between 1800 and 1816. At the same time, leaders for South American independence, such as Simón Bolívar, Manuel Piar, and Luis Brión, found the island to be a strategic base. Following the example of England (1833) and France (1848), the Dutch abolished slavery in 1863.

During the Second World War, the island, with its large harbor, played an essential role in fuel supply for the Allied forces. In 1940, before the invasion of the Netherlands by Nazi Germany, the British occupied Curaçao and French Aruba. In 1942 the port of the island was besieged by German submarines on several occasions. The US Navy established the Fourth Fleet, responsible for countering enemy naval operations in the Caribbean and the South Atlantic. The US Army also sent aircraft and personnel to help protect the oil refineries and bolster the Venezuelan Air Force. In 1954, Curaçao, together with the other Netherlands Antilles, gained political autonomy. It should therefore be no surprise that some artists from Curaçao focus on European industrial exploitation and neglect.

**Tirzo Martha** (b. 1965, Curaçao) is recognized throughout the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a Dutch Master. Martha has made decaying social conditions in his neighborhood, Buena Vista, in Willemstad, a recurring focus of his art. Evolving from objects he chooses like an anthropologist, Martha's art reveals the detritus that furnishes marginalized people's lives. His ideas come from oral information he gathers from the living conditions of people in his neighborhood: how they cope with their environments, how they use objects, and how they express their dreams and disappointments. Martha translates such information into structures that become his art. He makes installations, videos, and performances that are very close to the living conditions and facilities of



Tirzo Martha, *The auto Self-portrait of a culture*, 2017. Wooden sculptures, screw, construction foam, wooden chair, afro combs, porcelain house and a lamp, Approx. 48 x 48 x 72 in. Courtesy of the artist.

the people. He creates his sculptural forms, art performances, and installations for public spaces.

Martha's use of discarded materials belies the precision of his craftsmanship. His choice of materials references the detritus of society and reflects relationships of fiction to reality. His materials typically include found objects, mannequins, and machinery. He improvises allegories and metaphors from history, local lore, and poverty through these materials. His allegories are often spiritual, including rites, rituals from African religions, Afro-Caribbean myths, Christianity, and fetishism. His oeuvre describes victimization, entrapment, enslavement, tourist exploitation, and destruction from materialism. The art of Tirzo Martha encapsulates generic issues of the Caribbean, its relationship to the industrial world, and the history of its exploitation by Europe and the American mainland. While his ideas emerge from local associations, they become universal themes of tragedy through iconic imagery of historic cultural continuity despite social decay.

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Dominican Republic shares two-thirds of the island the Spanish named Hispaniola with what came to be called Haiti. It has a rich cultural

heritage and a history fraught with genocide and suppression. The Spanish committed the earliest genocide of the Taíno/Arawak Amerindians in Hispaniola, which they soon continued in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The French captured the island and ruled it until enslaved Black people revolted to form a part of the island into the new nation of Haiti in 1803. After the revolution, many white French landowners remained in Haiti, but most fled to the Dominican portion to join others there. Most enslaved Black people in the Dominican part of the island fled to predominantly Black and free Haiti. The Dominican portion of the island returned to Spanish sovereignty in 1814 but was freed in 1821. Between 1822 and 1844, the president of Haiti sent troops to invade the Dominican territory. Many Haitians followed the troops there and remained. The white Dominican population instilled fear of Haitian Black people, which evolved into a fantasy that "real" Dominicans are white and not mixed-race people of African and European descent. As a result, the art of African origin was suppressed for a long time.

Rafael Trujillo, president of the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1961, was responsible for the murder of 5,000 Haitian border workers in 1937. In the 1930s, artists, such as Celeste Wossy Gil (1890–1985) and Yoryi Morel (1906–1979), Ramón Oviedo (1924–2015), and Ivan Tovar (b. 1942), were among the first modernists in the Dominican Republic. Darío Suro (1917–1997) and Jaime Colsón (1901–1975) studied mural painting in Mexico and brought some of those ideas back home to the Dominican Republic. Ironically, the murderous Trujillo helped art during his presidency from 1930 to 1961. Trujillo considered himself a patron of the arts, and cultivated that image for the world to view the Dominican Republic as a culturally enlightened place. Trujillo funded the National School of Fine Arts and Dominican National Biennial. He cultivated Jewish immigrants and supporters of the Spanish Civil War, many of whom were supporters of art or artists themselves. The additional white population solidified the Eurocentric aspect of art in the nation. The

Trujillo administration controlled artistic form, requiring the artist to present ideas to government agencies for approval.

Nevertheless, artists began to disguise their ideas with covert social expression. By the 1950s, they explored abstract art with symbols from Taíno culture and folklore. After Trujillo's presidency, many artists revolted from the formal, controlled institutions to explore unknown ideas. Many artists were intuitive or self-taught. Others emigrated to Europe or the US to study and to make art. Whether at home or abroad, an important aspect of the art of the Dominican Republic at that time was abstraction, which was largely inspired by knowledge of the art of Wifredo Lam, as it was in Puerto Rico. As in Cuba and Puerto Rico, Lam's influence was in developing Indigenous and African imagery within abstraction that had universal appeal.

**Scherezade García** (b. 1966, Dominican Republic). Imagery in her work ranges from installations of the tent-like structures covered with images of Dominican tenant buildings and bodegas, with light, street sounds, and fragments of Spanish language emanating from within. Intermittently, breaking wave sounds add to the mix coming from a mural-sized beach scene. Such works are concerned with issues of cultural identity, the origin of birth, the yearnings of immigrants, and anxiety and trauma intrinsic to the challenges of cultural acceptance or rejection. Her works focus on the myths and dreams constructed by imperialist and neocolonialist economic and political systems. A site-specific mural explores the relationship between the Dominican Republic and the immigrants' new homeland.

Large images of waves and found objects appear to be the ebb and flow of losses and gains of migration. García's art is about cross-cultures within Hispaniola, and the division between the



Scherezade García, *Paradise According to the Tropics II*, from the series *Super Tropics*, 2014. Acrylic, pigment, charcoal, ink, collage on canvas, 51 x 75 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Joiro Minaya, *#dominicanwomengooglesearch*, 2016. UV print on Sintra and fabric collage, approx. 72 x 240 x 240 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Stefan Hagen.

Dominican Republic and Haiti. Added to that is the common challenge of immigration acceptance and conflict those cultures experience in the US. Some of García's works hearken back to earlier centuries of Spanish rule in Dominica, and cultural myths and folklore, no less than racial complexities and the politics of skin coloring. The issue of bordering the separation of Haiti and Dominica is another vital factor in her work.

Her imagery relates to symbols of Catholicism, Vodun, anxiety, and trauma. They also suggest states of perpetual transience. Yet her images, which often scintillate in color and pageantry costumes, appear as beckoning, seductive yet mysterious and foreboding.

**Joiri Minaya** (b. 1990, New York) grew up in the Dominican Republic. Minaya has done various installation-based pieces, focusing on patterns, textiles, and their cultural implications. Many of Minaya's images are enlarged, decorated prints that she cuts out and hangs in silhouettes that become festive and sensual tropical patterns that appear to dance. Some of her works include women dressed in spandex, bodysuits, and gaudy tropical print. Her works are sculptures with titillating assemblages of thick, braided hair and female busts, typically embedded in lush, greenhouse environments evolved from pixelated tropical plants.

Minaya's art explores the relationship of women of color and the privileged, mostly white people in the Dominican Republic and the US. Minaya's theme is the "Eurocentric colonial gaze," a historic and continuing source of trauma to Dominican women at home and abroad. In Minaya's work, women of color appear as sex objects and entertainers for colonialists and tourists. Her burlesque and satirical images show native women in cheap attire and cosmetics, prepared to entertain a ruling class. Minaya makes imagery in which the underprivileged appear to take ownership of such stereotypes. These images may challenge the viewer's discomfiture. Minaya's art dissects historic colonial stereotypes of women of color in the Dominican Republic. Yet, her art suggests the irony that these are costumes, subterfuge, like mines on a battlefield. In her art, camouflage is the weapon of the exploited class. In Minaya's art, costume, cosmetics, and gaudy sexuality is a camouflage of the underprivileged to battle the myriad social trauma they face and to gain the dignity they seek. Minaya's art suggests that all life exists inside a veil or a mask. We each wear a mask. In Minaya's art, stereotype becomes a political weapon.

## HAITI

Haiti is the western third of the island of Hispaniola, with the Dominican Republic in the eastern two-thirds. Haiti has two official languages: Haitian Creole and French. Columbus came upon

the island in 1492, where he found a kingdom of Taínos. He proclaimed it owned by Spain, and the Spanish soon exterminated the Taínos. In 1660, the French took control of the western part of the island and named it St. Dominique; it became one of the wealthiest of France's colonies, producing vast quantities of sugar and coffee grown by enslaved Africans. In the 1780s, a series of slave revolts broke out in Haiti as enslaved people rebelled against treatment by French landowners. The Haitian revolution concluded in 1803 with Toussaint Louverture's victory over French colonists and Napoleon's France, making it the first successful slave revolution in world history and the first Black nation of the Americas. Jean Jacques Dessalines, a general in the army of the newly independent Black slaves, was made Haiti's first president.

The second president, Henri Christophe (1767–1820), encouraged the development of art in Haiti from the beginning of his term in office, 1807. Christophe and wealthy educated Haitians of his time believed in the preeminence of European culture and cultivated it for the new nation. Wealthy people commissioned European artists to decorate their estates, public places, and churches. The Haitian government's subsequent liaison with the Vatican cemented European Catholicism with art in Haiti. The poor and underprivileged left out of European society maintained African traditions and religions under the radar. This cultural duality continued for more than a hundred years.

In 1928 during the American occupation of Haiti (1915–34), Dr. Jean Price-Mars (1876–1969), a Haitian intellectual, published a series of essays called *Ainsi Parla L'Oncle* (*Thus Spoke the Uncle*), advocating a formal rediscovery of Haiti's African past and noting its continuum among the poor. These documents came to be called "The Indigenist Movement." About the same time, William Edouard Scott (1884–1964), an African American painter, had an exhibition in Port-au-Prince that received national attention for its local themes. Many Haitian people, especially the poor, were inspired by Scott's paintings and, although primarily

untrained, sought to emulate his direction. In 1944 Le Centre d'Art was created in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, by American watercolorist DeWitt Peters and prominent Haitian intellectuals, to develop art that characterized the ancestry of Haiti. It was an educational institution, gallery, and reference institution for the promotion of Haitian art. Le Centre d'Art led to more established recognition that wider Haitian art—and indeed Caribbean art—began with Taíno people and African slavery more than 500 hundred years ago. Among the earliest artists of Le Centre d'Art was the renowned Hector Hippolyte. Others to follow included Jasmin Joseph (1923–2005), Georges Liautaud (1899–1991), Marilène Phipps-Kettlewell (b. 1950), Marithou Latortue Dupoux (b. 1948), Wilson Bigaud (1931–2010), and sculptor Jean Claude Rigaud (b. 1945).

In 1972 the Musée d'Art Haïtien du College St. Pierre opened in Haiti. It includes a venerable collection of Haitian art. Historically, spiritualism has played an essential role in Haitian art. Some Haitian artists practiced Vodun before they became artists. Hector Hyppolite (1894–1948), Robert Saint-Brice (1898–1973), Andre Pierre (1916–2005), and Laforte Félix (1933–2016) were *houngans* (Vodun priests) before they became artists.

The victory of the Haitian revolution and the expressed goals of the nation made Haiti a mecca for the continuum of African-derived culture in the Americas. Artists from the US and across the Caribbean traveled to Haiti. They infused the nation with more ideas, including European modernism such as Cubism, and art by Black people worldwide. Prominent among them was Wifredo Lam of Cuba, who traveled to Haiti twice—1941 and 1946—and shared ideas. The anthropologist and author Zora Neale Hurston traveled to Haiti to study Vodun on a Guggenheim fellowship in 1936, and studied Vodun and zombies. In her book *Go Tell My Horse*, she documents seeing zombies (living dead people) and includes photos she took of them. The same year, anthropologist, choreographer, and dance innovator Kathleen Dunham

visited Haiti, took Vodun imitation in Haiti, and became a Mambo (Vodun performance priest). Vodun was legalized in Haiti in 1946, which further encouraged public and artistic acceptance. James A. Porter and Loïs Mailou Jones, art professors at Howard University, traveled and lectured in Haiti. Loïs Mailou Jones married Haitian artist Louis Vergniaud Pierre-Noël, and they kept homes in Haiti and Washington, DC. In the 1940s, the Haitian government commissioned the African American artist Richmond Barthé to sculpt Henri Christophe.

Haiti's optimism was short-lived as European powers forced it to pay France for loss of plantation revenue. European countries blocked Haiti to enforce reparation, and the US created an embargo. The Haitian government borrowed millions from US banks at exorbitant interest rates for 150 years to repay France until 2010, when the World Bank waived the remainder of the debt. Haiti was the first and only country in history to win a war but pay reparation to the loser. Haiti's amount paid off in the middle of the twentieth century is the contemporary equivalent of \$20–\$25 billion. Added to that, many Haitian presidents, some with US support, stole millions from their people. Thus, Haiti, the center of culture and a promised land, remains the poorest country in the Caribbean.

**Edouard Duval-Carrié** (b. 1954, Haiti) works in various media: altarpieces, lacquered tiles and reliquaries, painting, sculpture, and, more recently, installations. His art is typically about the culture and history of Haiti and its evolution in the African diaspora. With irony and satire, his art explores politics, wealth, extravagance, poverty, and spirituality—real or imagined. Duval-Carrié has developed a style of figures that he paints in elaborate detail. They are flat, graphic, and stark images. They are deliberately posed, zombie-like in his tableau, and painted in rich detail.

Imagery in his works is typically about the strife and suffering of enslaved people, naked souls chained to others, and the brutality of enslavers. In his art, clothed and fancily dressed, skeletal faces are wearing jackets adorned with what may



Edouard Duval-Carrié, *Beasts of Burden*, 2021. Aluminum, acrylic, and glitter glue, 96 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.

be African style amulets—little packets of powder the captives took to the Americas. Oppression of the wealthy, fear, power, and deceit are common themes as his art satirizes generations of puppet-like leaders with decadent and sordid entourages. Overlaying all is the sometimes mysterious, sometimes regal, sometimes imagined, and sometimes fearsome spirits of the *Loa*, system of the gods of the Vodun religion.

Duval-Carrié's art includes much satire. Some of his figures in his art are dressed in the style of eighteenth century France, recalling the period of the French Revolution, which Black Haitians mimicked. It expresses issues of regal culture in spite of contradiction in Haiti, and effects of the Eurocentric world's historical antagonism and hypocrisy. Duval-Carrié uses the lush Caribbean vegetation to place his imagery.

## JAMAICA

Columbus landed in Jamaica on his second voyage in 1494. He took the island for Spain, and the Spanish soon murdered and enslaved the native Taíno people for the land. Spain occupied Jamaica until England took it in 1665. The British found Taínos, and about five hundred enslaved Africans there, but rapidly imported thousands more to run plantations of tobacco, indigo, and cocoa, which

gave way to the production of far more lucrative sugar cane. Because of Jamaica's large harbor at Port Royal/Kingston, the island became central to British trade and British pirates. Jamaica was also the central British port for the selling of enslaved people to the Americas. Escaped enslaved people, called the Maroons, fled to the mountains and defended themselves successfully against the British, who fought two declared wars against them. As a result of the first Maroon War (1728–1740), the British ceded territory permanently to the Maroons. As a result of the Second Maroon War (1795–1796), the British shipped many Maroons to other islands and Nova Scotia. Descendants of some of those in Nova Scotia returned to Africa to help establish Sierra Leone. In addition to the Maroon Wars, there were more than 150 slave revolts in Jamaica, which largely led to the British abolition of slavery in all their colonies in 1832. Jamaica's contemporary population is overwhelmingly of African descent, plus Indian, Chinese, Lebanese, and Filipino. English is the language of Jamaica, but most people also speak Jamaican Patois, an informal language made from African languages and English.

Enslaved Jamaicans made paintings and sculptures, as did succeeding generations. Art gained serious attention in Jamaica with Edna Manley's inspiration and example in the 1930s. Edna Manley (1900–1987) was born in England to a white English father and a white Jamaican mother. She married Norman Manley, who became the first prime minister of Jamaica. Essentially a sculptor, she made paintings as well. Edna Manley had studied art in London, where she worked with Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. When she came to Jamaica, the island's African heritage inspired her. This inspiration led her to transform her work to be about Black people. Edna Manley inspired and helped more than two generations of Jamaican artists. Her work, art ideas, and influence remain prominent in Jamaica. Edna Manley inspired artists such as Alvin Marriot (1902–1992), Ronald Moody (1900–1984), John Dunkley (1891–1947), Albert Huie (1920–2010), Carl Abrahams

(1911–2005), Christopher González (1943–2008), Osmond Watson (1934–2005), Karl Parboosingh (1923–1975), Kapo (1911–1989), Barrington Watson, (1931–2016), Karl “Jerry” Craig (b. 1936), David Boxer (1946–2017), and Margaret Chen (b.1951). The former Edna Manley School of Art in Jamaica, named in her honor, and renamed the Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts, is one of the Caribbean’s preeminent art schools. It offers several degree programs.

As in the case of most Caribbean nations, many Jamaican artists lived and worked abroad. The National Gallery of Art in Jamaica contains a venerable collection of Jamaican artists, which developed through the vision of its most prominent director and curator, David Boxer, followed by Veerle Poupeye. The National Gallery has held many notable international art exhibitions, including works by Sam Gilliam and Joyce Scott. Eddie Chambers from the UK; Lowery Sims, former curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and I, while I was Dean of the Tyler School of Art, curated important exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art. The Institute of Jamaica, an archive of Jamaican culture, has also hosted many art exhibitions, including a notable one by US artist Fred Wilson. Other African American artists have also worked in Jamaica, including Richmond Barthé, who lived in Jamaica in the late 1940s to early 1950s, and Barkley L. Hendricks, who painted there in many winters before his death in 2017. In the 1980s–90s, Leslie King-Hammond, Graduate Dean of the Maryland Institute College of Art, working with the Edna Manley School of Art, recruited students from Jamaica, which promoted significant cultural exchange.

**Albert Chong** (b. 1958, Jamaica) makes photographs, installations, and sculptures. His art sometimes includes found objects, appropriated and familial photographs, and many natural forms that serve as shamanic talismans with personal references that may also aid as cultural or spiritual signifiers.

Much of his art are narratives of race and ethnicity, especially in Jamaica. He mediates many of these with whimsy that infers the complex struggles of the Asian and African diaspora displaced peoples. Personal history, mysticism, spirituality,

race, and identity are among the topics in his work. These works range from playful juxtapositions and formal still life, to works representing and reanimating Chong’s family history. His art explores and celebrates his ancestry in themes such as “Aunt Winnie,” “Justice,” and “Miss Peggy.” His works include his “Throne for the “Ancestors” series and his portraits of artist friends in Jamaica. In most of his art, Chong explores the issues of the Chinese Caribbean migration to Jamaica from the mid-nineteenth century through our time. Chong’s photographs, sculptures, and installations explore a vast cultural and mythical range in intimate and poetic biographies of a personal vision.

**Laura Facey** (b. 1954, Commander of Distinction, Jamaica) studied at West Surrey College of Art & Design, Farnham, England, and at the Rhode Island School of Design. She lives and works in Jamaica, and has exhibited internationally, including in the UK and the US. She has worked in bronze, stone, and styrofoam, but she is best known for her woodcarving. She was one of the first artists in Jamaica to produce assemblage and installation art, often incorporating found objects with carved elements.

Her large sculptures echo issues of slavery and colonial Americas, and their effects on contemporary life. Her work spans over forty years. She interprets the energy of the earth, the lush vegetation, and the constant flow of the river at her home in St Ann, Jamaica. Facey’s sculptures are monumental due to the proportions of the forms that make them seem larger than they are—even though some are very large. Her sculptures typically include modernist abstraction and intuitive sensuality. Her works of virile black figures, realistic or abstracted, appear to have emerged from a tradition of modernism mixed with African forms as may be found in Jamaican art by Edna Manley, Alvin Marriott, and Kapo, to name a few. However, Facey is no mere follower. Her art is fueled by literature, philosophy, religion, social and political events, gender, and sexuality. She has expanded Jamaican art with her indelibly powerful vision of making monumental forms sensual and abstracting sexuality, freedom, cultural metaphor, and memory. Nuanced among these are themes connected to African and Jamaican ancestry.



Laura Facey, *Guide Their Way Home*, 2021. Guango, cedar, mahogany, 5 minute video accompaniment, 29 x 27 x 16 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Albert Chong, *The Natural Mystic*, 1982. Archival pigment print on canvas, 36 x 36 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Arthur Simms, *Face Mon*, 2014. Feathers, mule deer head, cobblestone, sticks, bones, wire, wood, 28 x 36 x 36 in. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery, New York.

**Arthur Simms** (b. 1961, Jamaica) was inspired in early childhood by the improvisationally built pushcarts he saw carrying wares in the streets of Kingston, where he lived until age seven when his family moved to New York. He began wrapping his sculptures in the late 1980s. He wraps objects with twine and cord, which gives iconic form to his sculptures while masking what is within. And within are densely packed pieces of hemp, interconnected scavenged pieces of metal and wire, and varied found objects, some protruding, some camouflaged, and others are deeply hidden. Objects in his wrapped forms are toys, pieces of glass, shells, toys, tires, motors, knives, pieces of cloth, and junk.

The impression is of sinister or ghost-like forms that are wrapped. The wrapping brings the images to life. Some of the images Simms makes are references to raising a proverbial Lazarus in Jamaican funeral processions and folklore. Some are like pushcarts of scavenged parts, discarded wares, and recycled things peddled by Jamaican higglers. He replicates in his art the life of the poor Jamaicans, no less than the rubbish of American urban neglect. Yet, there is this sense of rebirth in his art. In it are elements like ones found in festivals across the Caribbean, in the US, Canada, and the UK. Simms's art is about a continuum, like a proverbial phoenix rising from detritus that becomes improvised forms of the resurgence of life.



Paul Anthony Smith, *Midnight Blue #2*, 2020–21. Unique picotage with oil sticks, acrylic gouache and spray paint mounted on museum board and sintra panel, 96 x 72 x 1.125 in. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Right: Nari Ward, *Black Sweat*, 2019. Shoelaces, shipping barrel, 74 x 44 in. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London. Photo: Matthew Herrmann.



**Paul Anthony Smith** (b. 1988, Jamaica) makes paintings on canvas and prints that explore Jamaican history, culture, identity, and the African diaspora. He alters photographs with a tool to pick and scratch away surfaces, reconfiguring face and skin into mystical patterns. He achieves this with textures that appear to shimmer. Some of his two-dimensional patterns and prisms become like bodies of African rituals, tribal masks, and scarifications. Others morph into the imagery of European oppression, as much as Jamaican folklore, myth, and specters of practices that are at once satirical and deathlike, such as in Junkanoo festivals. His imagery is simultaneously African, Afro-Caribbean, masked with camouflage. It has been said, and I agree, that Smith's art suggests a relationship to W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of "double consciousness" and Frantz Fanon's theory of diasporic cultural confusions caused by colonialism. Masks, masquerades, and camouflage are the overarching sophistication of two-dimension-

al space in Smith's art. His figures alternate in pictorial depth and two-dimensional relationships. He achieves images of phantasmagoric dance that references culture while at the same time are dances of abstract space. He merges modern Western abstract space with African patterns to create an alternative essence to festival in painting.

**Nari Ward** (b. 1963, Jamaica) makes sculptural installations composed of discarded material found and collected in his neighborhood. He uses familiar, everyday objects to create a unified environment for his audience. Inciting a spirit of community seems to be the core of his creative mission.

A central theme in his art is the proverbial "wall." Ward's use of walls is political and symbolic, reflecting a need for constant reconsideration of their purpose. His art explores resilient yet disenfranchised characters by using the wall as a medium for his sayings.

Ward mines American history. Much of his art is text-driven, such as black-and-white and color wall drawings, of shoelaces. Black-and-white suggests referencing the historic tension of contrasting skin color in America. Shoelaces suggest historic symbols of bondage, entrapment, and labor. He creates these images in ways such as drilling shoelaces into walls, adding them to digital billboards, and images on Kiosks. Some of his text-based works focus on protest and social justice, such as two pieces bearing the lyrics “We Shall Overcome” and “Blowin’ in the Wind.” Many of his texts are statements that suggest violation, impending change, or urgency.

Sculptural forms are an equally important part of Ward’s work. Ward transforms found objects into new meaning and places them in contexts with layers of meaning. The sculpture becomes a character. His sculptures are like discarded fragments pulled together by a historic magnetic cultural force. Ward’s art in all its forms takes impetus from his multiple identities: Jamaican, American, Black, humanitarian, cosmopolitan, but always a signifier of racial history, social injustice, and redemption of the indomitable human spirit.

## PUERTO RICO

The history of Puerto Rico began with the settlement of the Ortoiroid people between 430 BC and 1000 AD. When Columbus arrived in the New World in 1492, the dominant Indigenous culture was the Taínos. This mixture has created a local cultural tradition allied more to Europe and the US than the non-Hispanic Caribbean. In July 1898, during the Spanish American War, US Army forces occupied Puerto Rico. In 1917, the US Congress passed the Jones-Shafroth Act, which granted citizenship to all Puerto Ricans. Since Puerto Ricans are US citizens, many move freely back and forth between the two countries, including artists.

Among important historic Puerto Rican artists is José Campeche (1751–1809), who did paintings that rivaled some of the best art in Europe. He made paintings in a traditional European style. However, Francisco Oller (1833–1917) is said to

have laid the foundation of native Puerto Rican painting. Oller studied in Spain and France. He returned to Puerto Rico to paint and to guide younger artists. Oller advised them to make art from their local experience. Although he worked mainly in a European style, Oller explored local subject matter. Oller tried unsuccessfully to create an art academy in San Juan. Ramón Frade (1875–1954) ) was another important Puerto Rican painter of people and landscapes. Another was Miguel Pou (1880–1968). His style was less formal than Frade’s and among his best paintings was a person of African descent, which was unusual in Puerto Rican art of his day. Campeche, Oller, Frade, and Pou were among the best artists of the Caribbean in their times. Their ideas reflected Eurocentric traditions, and much Indigenous imagery was largely absent from their work.

El Centro de Arte Puertorriqueño, in 1950, infused Puerto Rico with Indigenous ideas. Lorenzo Homar developed outstanding printmaking (linoleum, woodcuts and serigraphs) at the Centro, and Antonio Martorell and Myrna Báez continued it. The University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, a large public university, offers undergraduate and graduate levels. The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón, La Escuela Hotelera de San Juan, and the Inter American University of Puerto Rico-Metro offer undergraduate and graduate art degree programs, as well. Casa Cortés in Old San Juan houses the Chocolate Cortés Collection of Caribbean artists.

More recent Puerto Rican art explores Indigenous ideas and conditions of Puerto Rican life in the US. The Young Lords began as a Chicago street gang in the 1960s, battling gentrification and unfair evictions in Puerto Rican neighborhoods before joining the Black Panthers and the Rainbow Coalition. It expanded into a national political movement in the 1970s when its center moved to New York, with branches in Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles, and elsewhere in California. Another generation of Puerto Rican artists emerged in the 1980s that explored ethnic, racial, and national identity in their work through mixed



Alejandro Guzman, *Return of the Intellectual Derelict*, 2022. Mixed media, Approx. 36 x 41 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Ada Bobonis, *Nuevo Trato (New Deal)* (installation detail), 2020–2021. Photography, 54 x 166 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Thais Llorca Lezcano.

media, painting, photography, video, performance, or installation. The Young Lords make art and offer readings about its history and goals. Some Puerto Rican artists address Puerto Rico's battle for independence and the numerous obstacles facing disadvantaged Puerto Ricans on the US mainland.

**Alejandro Guzmán** (b. 1978, Puerto Rico) installations, and orchestrates and participates in ritualistic dramas featuring “performance sculptures” that he roughly constructs from disparate found materials. The actors in his ceremonies dance around or within the wheeled vessels made of commonplace items such as wood, fake flowers, mirrors, cut paper, plastic, and knitted yarn patterns, activating the space with a range of expression—from sexual exultation to discontent. Guzman has said that sharing our inherent mutual experiences and beliefs is at the forefront of his work.

Some of his installations are about the human connection to the natural world. These works he calls “performance sculpture.” They emphasize duality, such as colorful flowers and drawings on one side, contrasted mirrors and black-and-white on the other. He extends imagery to walls and ceilings as well. Often, he adds to such environ-

ments with people in the performance of sensual awakening, ecstatic exuberance. Sometimes he adds or substitutes performances and/or imagery of concern for the environment.

Guzmán creates environments that morph from high-tech kinetics into cult mysticism and spiritual fantasies, new and old, from cultures as diverse as Haitian Vodun to Versace-like high fashion, Caribbean festivals, Mardi Gras, or Carnival. His works display a cacophony of totemic fetish with motorized electronic functions overlaid with voice, music, and sound. The art of Guzmán conjures fantasies of misdirection, confusion, and misunderstanding in environments that evoke the future, present, and past. His art references the cultural complexity of life today, with a strong emphasis on the influence of the diverse cultures of the Caribbean.

**Ada Bobonis** (b. 1963, Puerto Rico) is an installation artist, sculptor, painter, and educator. She attended the Escuela de Artes y Oficios in Barcelona, and earned her bachelor's degree in art, with a major in painting, at the University of Barcelona.

She works mainly in sculpture and installations, although she has inclined more toward installations. She uses such rudimentary materi-



Miguel Luciano, *RUN-A-BOUT*, 2017. 1969 Schwinn Run-A-Bout bicycle, restored and customized, chrome-plated machete, flags, 48 x 60 x 26 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Chaz Langley.



Pepón Osorio, *Lonely Soul*, 2008. Wooden crutches, fiberglass, wood, styrofoam, resin, pins, wheelchair wheels, approx. 106 x 83 x 77 in. Courtesy of the artist.

als as rope, fishing line, and wool, which she may weave, braid, or unbraided, and various other organic semi-abstract forms and artisan techniques like knitting, spinning, and fraying. Her work questions many issues. Among them is the individual versus the collective. Her work is also about the feminine versus the masculine. It is about the natural, the contaminated, the material, and the spiritual. Her work explores urban and natural space in places where the past and the present may coexist in permanent contradiction, such as sites and buildings that have changed their function or areas under construction that appear to be undefined or isolated. She expresses concepts about the individual and the environment, dialogue with a specific architectural context, and an active or physical engagement between the viewer and the work. She incorporates photographs into her work to document her sites. Her work is grounded in architectural design, and formalist structure evolved from studying housing plans and her imaginative variations. Her art often alludes to the sedimentation of cultures and the layering of systems throughout history.

**Miguel Luciano** (b. 1972, Puerto Rico) makes paintings, prints, posters, and sculptures. He renders his paintings and prints like commercial designs, satirical posters, “bling bling,” and hip-hop culture. His sculptures are highly crafted and polished. A recurring theme in his works is the image of manual labor as shrines. Labor is the work of the poor and disenfranchised, which Luciano symbolizes with images such as the plantain and the goat. In his work, the shrine of labor becomes a metaphor for the proverbial “The Power and the Glory” (e.g., the Holy Mother, the priest, the rosary). Luciano’s shrine evolves into other forms, such as the ice shave cart (common to Caribbean cultures). The rosary transforms into a bejeweled plantain, an icon of exploitation in colonial Puerto Rican labor slavery and black exploitation. Luciano’s bejeweled, satirical creations bring new insights into how the meaning of symbols changes through immigration. Fashioning objects that assume the bling-bling guise of hip-hop culture—where extravagant platinum jewels are a sought-after commodity, Luciano’s art further underscores ways in which Latinos

are staking a claim in a culture they, too, helped produce. Luciano's work is often collaborative, working with various community groups and organizations, such as The Young Lords. The effect of the art of Miguel Luciano is to transform cultural perception through community values. His art also addresses consumer dependency versus consumer innovation and improvisation. His art is about improvised culture, including poverty and racism in Puerto Rico, which extends to, and transforms and expands, in the US to include life and struggle, and poor and disenfranchised people of different colors and races.

**Pepón Osorio** (b. 1955, Puerto Rico) is a sculptor and installation artist who has worked with numerous communities across the US and internationally creating installations. He uses different objects and videos to portray political and social issues in the Latino community. His art includes objects, videos, and detailed installations that evoke familiar environments, such as barber-shops, offices, and homes, and disturbing places such as jails and hospitals. His art responds to his experiences with persons inside specific Latino and other communities. His themes are about family, community, and identity.

Osorio is a storyteller of the highest order. His multimedia installations, which are sometimes all-inclusive and at other times parts of a space or gallery, address universal concerns while remaining authentic to issues and narratives of communities with which he identifies. Many of his works are life-size environments, constructed in meticulous detail as rooms, shelters, prisons, hospitals, habitats of the poor, the sick, or disenfranchised, sometimes with contrasts of wealth and affluence, and bucolic landscapes and/or furnishings on the outside. Objects in his work, including trinkets, jewelry, photos, keepsakes, and a great variety of objects and memorabilia align with and accent his stories. They often become a participant as you walk through and engage with the environments Osorio creates.

Osorio's art tells stories of misfortune, illness, tragedy, affirmation, and hope, but never in a

didactic way. His work elicits empathy with a Promethean vision that moves viewers into ethereal experiences. Like great dramas, his art tells of heartbreak or dreams, and humbles the complexities of our soul that make us all human.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Columbus came upon Trinidad and Tobago on his third voyage in 1498, and Spain claimed them until 1797. Tobago's control changed from British to French to the Courlanders (Latvians), then again to the British, who captured it and Trinidad, and united them into a single British colony in 1797. The British imported thousands of Indians as indentured servants, which comprise a plurality of the population, followed by Blacks, some whites, and Amerindians. They became independent from Britain in 1962 and a republic in 1976.

Carnival forms a large part of art in Trinidad and Tobago, as many Trinidad and Tobago artists have been inspired by Carnival, or Masquerade, more commonly known in Trinidad as Mas. With Indians being a large portion of the population, Mas naturally includes powerful imagery from South Asia. It also includes imagery from China and Africa. Painting, sculpture, photography, and other media came to the fore relatively slowly.

Among the first and most consistent painters is Carlisle Chang (1921–2001), who had a significant impact on the Caribbean since the 1940s when his name made headlines in art reviews and the newspapers. Chang designed masks and made mural paintings that combined African and Chinese imagery, inspired by Mas. Mas in Trinidad is the most elaborate festival in the Caribbean. LeRoy Clarke (1938–2021), a self-taught artist, has also done numerous paintings with masks and designed Mas costumes. Clark's work extends into African and Caribbean mysticism such as Obeah. The art of Trinidadian artists, such as self-taught sculptor Francisco Cabral (b. 1949), speak to ideas that extend Mas beyond the Caribbean. His sculptures are about slavery, colonial exploitation, Mesoamerican ornamentations, fetish, African and Hindu imagery. Another, Christopher



Renluka Maharaj, *Guardians Of Our Stories*, 2021. Acrylic paint on pigmented ink print, 40 x 60 in. Courtesy of the artist.

Cozier (b. 1959), who studied at the Maryland Institute College of Art, is essentially an abstract artist, doing paintings and collages. Much of his work is inspired by the colors and designs of Mas. Shastri Maharaj (b. 1953), educated in Trinidad and Canada, works in abstract variations on the imagery of the Americas and South Asia Indo-china. Kenwyn Crichtlow (b. 1951) is an abstract painter whose works evoke the natural environment of the earth, sea, and sky of the Caribbean. Shengé Ka Pharaoh (b. 1955) is self-taught. Much of his work are figurative paintings that include ancestral spirits, Ska, Reggae, and Calypso. Wendy M. Nanan (b. 1955) studied in England. Her works are in papier-mâché of masked figures made in spectacularly decorative costumes. She makes paintings about crossover cultures, such as the relationship between Hindu practices, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Obeah.

**Renluka Maharaj** (b. 1976, Trinidad and Tobago) is a multidisciplinary artist who incorporates photography with elements of performance, collage, painting, and installations.

Her work is often autobiographical narratives on history, memory, religion, gender, sexuality, and colonial history, and how they form identity. Maharaj lives in the US. Coming from a multicultural country like Trinidad and Tobago, and having

lived in different places, the themes of her work are inherently cross-cultural and transnational.

The British conceived the indenture system to maintain the plantation economies in the Caribbean. They transported over one million Indians from the subcontinent and scattered them throughout the British, French, and Dutch empires. The vast number of women murdered on a plantation is recorded in the same monotonous black ink, as are the morsels of tamarind and rice rationed on ships of indentured people from Calcutta to the Caribbean. Indentured Indian women appeared in British reports as regular victims of violence.

The British had them photographed during this period, and Maharaj reworks many of these old photographs in her art. Such archives, she came to realize, are rarely in color. Instead, she documents history in black and white. Many of her images are altered photographs of women's garments and jewelry, fashioning these objects to resemble her own experiences of family and growing up in Trinidad and Tobago, such as a woman with a halo and bare feet planted among the flora in the Caribbean in a mural of coconut or palm fronds. Maharaj's colored transformations are of women's armbands shimmering with silver enhanced by glitter, while she details rings

with lapis lazuli and other stones differentiated by color and texture. Maharaj plays on the coolie, pink and green stigma associated with indentured Indians in bold and glaring colors. Themes of diaspora, belonging, and Indo-Caribbean cultural identity inform her art.

## USA

Three of these artists live in the Caribbean: Ada Bobonis in Puerto Rico, Laura Facey in Jamaica, and Tirzo Martha in Curaçao. All the artists studied art in the Caribbean, the UK, Europe, Canada, and the US. All the artists were born in the Caribbean except Juan Sánchez, born to Puerto Rican parents in New York, and Joi Minaya, born in New York but grew up in the Dominican Republic. In this catalogue, she is listed among artists of the Dominican Republic. Art of the Caribbean has generally gone unnoticed in the US, even as many Caribbean artists have worked and achieved success in the US, and one of the greatest Caribbean artists, Wifredo Lam, attained global importance. Some prominent American artists have worked in the Caribbean: Winslow Homer, Alice Neel, Richmond Barthé, Sam Gilliam, Joyce Scott, Barkley L. Hendricks, and Fred Wilson, to name a few.

One reason for the neglect of Caribbean art may be that the region consists of different countries, cultures, races, and languages, so a common Caribbean culture is elusive. Another reason may be that its economy is primarily tourism, which creates an image of the region that overwhelms the importance of its art. And a third is that the US is a much better economic base for art, so Caribbean artists and patrons are attracted to the US for art school, exhibiting, sales, and broader public exposure.

**Juan Sánchez** (b. 1954, New York) became a prominent community leader and a member of Puerto Rican nationalist movements, such as the Comité Pro Libertad de Los Nacionalistas, where he worked as a poster designer and lecturer. The Young Lords and El Taller Boricua influenced his early work. The Young Lords formed in Chicago in the 1960s before moving their headquarters to



Juan Sánchez, *Nina Vejiganta Vuelve*, 2014. Mixed media on paper, Approx. 42 x 41 in. Courtesy of Guariken Arts Inc.

New York, and spreading organizations in other cities; The Young Lords were part of the original Rainbow Coalition in Chicago, which joined with Black people and underprivileged groups to fight injustice. El Taller Boricua is a printmaking workshop in New York that has served generations of Puerto Ricans and other artists. Sánchez's more recent work focuses on the condition and identity of Puerto Ricans, religious syncretism, racial and gender discrimination, and particularly the struggle for Puerto Rico's independence.

Sánchez's images include the Puerto Rican flag, Taíno pictographs, palm trees. He uses images of music as a symbol of the Afro-Latino diaspora. His use of music includes Puerto Rican music, Cuban music, jazz, Salsa, and fusion. He synthesizes African and Latino cultures. His work references the political struggle of underprivileged peoples and the assertion of Puerto Rican identity. Sánchez's art covers a vast range of ideas. Some of it is about Puerto Rico's historic battle for independence; social and political issues in the US; Puerto Ricans' adversity in America; interracial challenges of Latino and Anglo Americans; and a universal affirmation of the value of life. The overarching character of his art reveals a relentless embrace of love, passion, and dignity despite all adversity.

Sánchez's imagery evokes struggle and dialogue among the immigrants internationally. His works are patterns of communication of invented semiotics that transcend cultural barriers to address universal complexities of pain and the resiliency of joy.

## Conclusion

Like all immigrant artists, regarding their country of origin, they fuse their history with the conditions and challenges of their new environment. Caribbean artists make these fusions in excellent ways. Caribbean art is derived from the various and diverse people and histories of the Caribbean. It is from that understanding that the concept of Caribbean transitions is derived. Caribbean art includes a sense of transition in place and culture unique to its history. Many people have migrated worldwide throughout humanity, but they typically take their cultures or modify them to new experiences. The cultural origin of most Caribbean people has been suppressed and continuously adjusted. They came from foreign lands and have experienced cultural transition. Their unifying essence are their experiences and a common need to find identity through the historical and contemporary transition. It's as though the Caribbean is a stage in a passage of vacillation. The word "Caribbean" is a gerund. Like a name for a place that to its inhabitants was a way station, where new mixed cultures formed so that the word Caribbean is perceived as much as a verb as it is a noun. People of the Caribbean are eternal migrants. Wanderers. Poet Derek Walcott likens the Caribbean experience to Homer's *Odyssey*. The experience of the journey away and back home.

Much of the art in this exhibition is about the duality of the self in forced transition, such as enslavement from Africa to the Caribbean, where beauty and ownership of the land is an unintentional consequence, the result of the abolition of slavery, which, however much enjoyed—and they enjoy land and sea resoundingly—nevertheless leaves a vacuum to be filled with exploration of "where from" (Africa, China, India, and so on), and

"where to" (the US, Canada, the UK, and such). Looking back and looking forward, like travelers at a way station, is the essence of the Caribbean psyche, the state of transition that these artists explore.

The art of people of Caribbean descent varies in history, nationality, race, and religion. Despite their differences, they pursue experiences of transitions to, in, and from the Caribbean. Some make art that they derive from beliefs and or religions. Others combine ideas from different cultural groups to create an original Caribbean artistic character. Others still pursue such as digital and kinetic imagery from their Caribbean experience. I know of nowhere in the world where there is art from a wider range of syncretism.

This syncretism, which began with Taíno Art, Carnival, and Festival, expanded in scope and character to the mainland. Over the years, reciprocity of culture from the Caribbean and the mainland, often unnoticed and substantially undervalued, has nevertheless been the foundation of original American art.

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# LUIS CRUZ AZACETA

Luis Cruz Azaceta (b.1942, Havana, Cuba) left Cuba in exile at the age of eighteen. After immigrating to the US, Azaceta lived in New York, and graduated from the School of Visual Arts in 1969. He then began his long career as an artist.

His work has been in more than a hundred solo exhibitions and more than five hundred group exhibitions in the US, Latin America and Europe. He has been awarded grants from The Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation, among others. His work is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of Art in New York; the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC; Museo de Bellas Artes in Caracas, Venezuela; Marco, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey, Mexico; Artium Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Basque Country, Spain; Luciano Benetton Art Collection "Imago Mundi," Milan, Italy; and the Kerry Stokes Art Collection, Perth, Australia; among many others.



## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 *What a Wonderful World, 1975 to 2021*, curated by Bradley Sumrall, Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA.  
*Paisaje al limite*, curated by Gerardo Mosquera, NG Gallery, Panama City, Panama.  
*Luis Cruz Azaceta Lockdown*, Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, LA.
- 2021 *Personal Velocity in the Age of Covid*, Lyle O. Reitzel Gallery, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
- 2020 *Personal Velocity:40 Years of Painting*, George Adams Gallery, New York, NY.

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *Memory Project III*, Bar-David Museum of Art & Judaica, Baran, Israel.  
*La Primera Lluvia en el Desierto*, Dialogos Colección FEMSA, Instituto Estatal de la Cultura de Guanajuato, Mexico.  
*The Candy Store: Funk, Nut and Other Art with a Kick*, Crocker Museum, Sacramento, CA.  
*Radical Conventions: Cuban American Art from the 1980s*, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, FL.  
*A DREAM Deferred: Undocumented Immigrants and the American Dream*, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.  
*On the Horizon: Contemporary Cuban Art from the Pérez Art Museum Miami*, Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN.



Luis Cruz Azaceta, *Crisis I*, 2020. Acrylic on canvas, 96 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Luis Cruz Azaceta, *January 6, Rampage & Insurrection*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# JOSÉ BEDIA

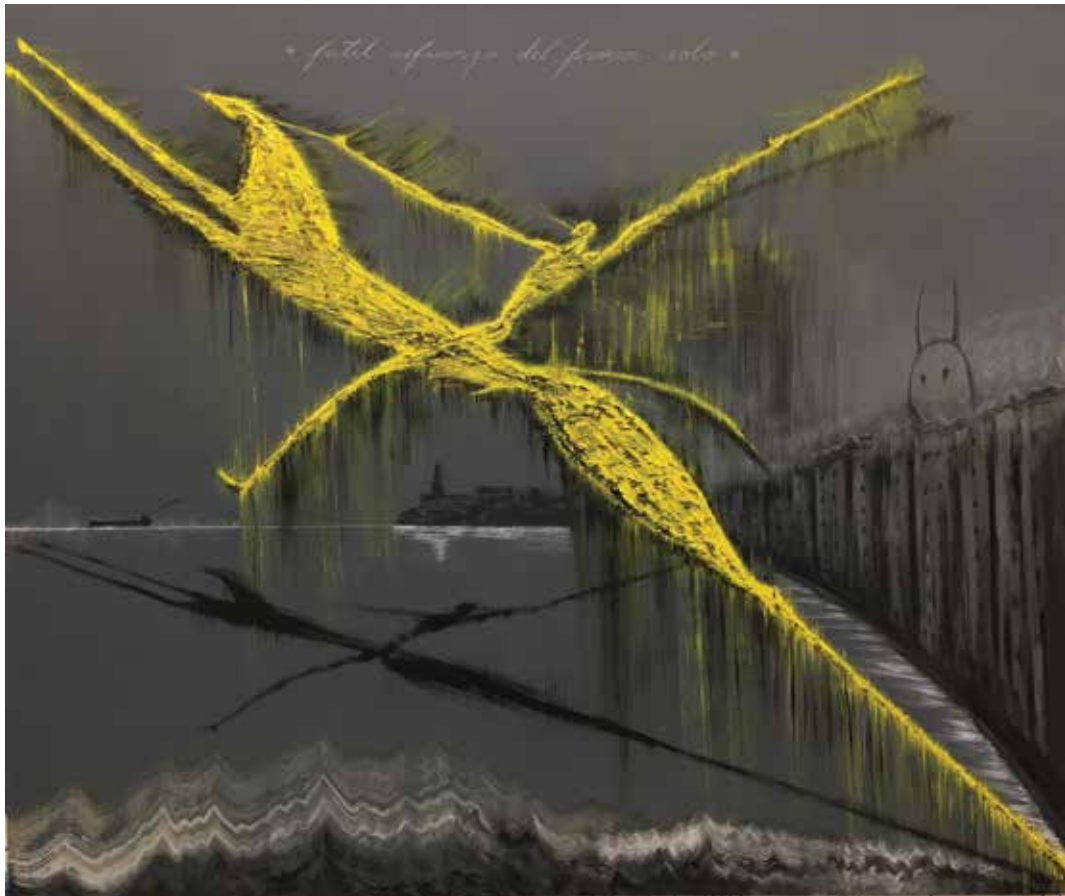
José Bedia (b.1959) studied at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes and the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana. Bedia's art has been strongly influenced by Amerindian and Afro-Cuban ideas. He became an initiate of Palo Monte, a Cuban religion that is believed to have evolved from the Kongo in Africa. His paintings include such imagery as Afro-Cuban altars and Abakuá symbols. Abakuá is an Afro-Cuban men's initiatory fraternity said to have originated in southeastern Nigeria and southwestern Cameroon. Elements of mysticism in Bedia's work may have been drawn from these sources.

Bedia left Cuba in 1990, settling initially in Mexico where he studied Indigenous art and culture. In 1993, Bedia moved to the US. Bedia has dedicated himself to the study of many cultures outside of Europe and the US. He lived among the Dakota Sioux and learned much about their religion, cultural practices, and iconography.

Whereas earlier artists interpreted African art to be harmonious with the evolution of the Western canon, Bedia seeks the opposite. He seeks to enter and understand other cultures, and learn their paths and intentions. He makes art from what he has learned. He does not copy, but instead adds what he learns so that his artistic vision becomes a synthesis of what he has learned and experienced.

Bedia's art provokes dialogue between Eurocentrism and other cultures. Bedia distills his vast and complex cultural iconography into simplified imagery. They are multicultural icons layered from civilizations of history.





José Bedia, *Futil Esfuerzo del Procer Solo*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 60 x 72 in. Jose Bedia Studio courtesy of Fredric Snitzer Gallery.



José Bedia, *Kongo Ndibu*, 2015. Acrylic on canvas, 82 x 110 in. Jose Bedia Studio courtesy of Fredric Snitzer Gallery.

# ADA BOBONIS

Ada Bobonis (b.1963) lives and works in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Bobonis received a BFA and MFA from the University of Barcelona, Spain. She is a recipient of El Serrucho - Emergency Grant, Beta-Local, Puerto Rico (2020 and 2017); the Emergency Grant, Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York, NY (2018); the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (NALAC) San Antonio, TX, and the Flamboyant Arts Fund Grant (2019); as well as the Pollock-Krasner Fellowship, New York, NY (2006). She participated in the Emergency Residency Initiative for artists impacted by Hurricane Maria, MASS MoCA Studios, North Adams, MA (2018); the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program, Brooklyn, NY (2010–2011); and in the artist-in-residence program of the Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, NM (2006). Some of her most recent projects are *Anarquía y dialéctica en el deseo, géneros y marginalidad en Puerto Rico-parte 2*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico (MACPR), San Juan, Puerto Rico (2020); *Unsettings*, Museo de Arte y Diseño (MADMI), San Juan, Puerto Rico (2019); *Cama de Mar*, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico; Km.02, Santurce, Puerto Rico (2018); *Residual*, Casa del Sargento (Beta-Local), San Juan, Puerto Rico (2017); *New York*, Art Museum of the Americas, OAS, Washington, DC (2012); and *Stages, Mountains, Water*, Queens Museum, Queens, NY (2012).

## Artist Statement

Through the construction of sculptures and installations, my work explores the representation of urban and natural space. I'm interested in places where the past and the present coexist in permanent contradiction, such as sites and buildings that have changed their function, or spaces that are under construction, and that feel undefined or isolated.

My works reflect many of my ongoing conceptual and thematic concerns, such as the relationship between individuals and the environment, the dialogue with a specific architectural context, and an active or physical engagement between the viewer and the work.

Photography is incorporated into the creative process as a tool to document the sites I work with, and to quote specific aspects of those places. The photos serve as a database to resolve formal aspects of my installations, extracting color, materials and shapes. Once the sculptural forms are solved through my process of abstraction, the photos are often incorporated into the installations. By doing this I seek to generate other ways to depict the places with which I work through the opposition of representational language and abstraction.



Thais Llorca Lezcano



Ada Bobonis, *Nuevo Trato (New Deal)* (installation detail), 2020–2021. Photography, 54 x 166 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Thais Llorca Lezcano.



Ada Bobonis, *Nuevo Trato (New Deal)* (installation detail), 2020–2021. Photography, 54 x 166 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Thais Llorca Lezcano.



Ada Bobonis, *Nuevo Trato (New Deal)* (installation detail), 2020–2021. Photography, 54 x 166 in. Courtesy of the artist.  
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Photo: Thais Llorca Lezcano.

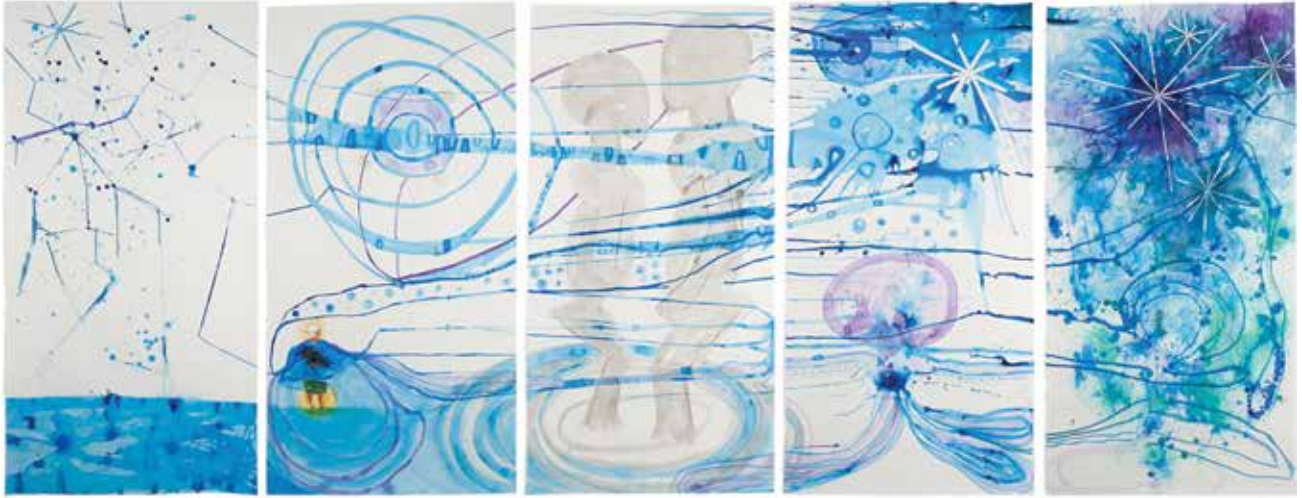
# MARÍA MAGDALENA CAMPOS-PONS

María Magdalena Campos-Pons (b. 1959, La Vega, Matanzas, Cuba) is an artist whose work combines and crosses diverse artistic practices, including photography, painting, sculpture, film, video, and performance. Her work addresses issues of history, memory, gender, and religion; it investigates how each of these themes influences identity formation. Directly informed by the traditions, rituals, and practices of her ancestors, her work is deeply autobiographical. Often using herself and her Afro-Cuban relatives as subjects, she creates historical narratives that illuminate the spirit of people and places, past and present, thereby rendering universal relevance from personal history. Recalling dark narratives of the transatlantic slave trade, her imagery and performances honor the labor of Black bodies on sugar plantations, renew Catholic and Santería religious practices, and celebrate revolutionary uprisings in the Americas.

Campos-Pons has had solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and the National Gallery of Canada, among other institutions. She has presented over thirty solo performances commissioned by institutions like the Guggenheim and the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery (both in collaboration with sound artist Neil Leonard). She also (in collaboration with Leonard) participated in the 49th Venice Biennial, the 55th Venice Biennial, and documenta 14. Her works are held in over 50 museums around the world, including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Pérez Art Museum, Miami.

Campos-Pons is currently the Cornelius Vanderbilt Endowed Chair of Fine Arts at Vanderbilt University and lives and works in Nashville, TN.





María Magdalena Campos-Pons, *She Always Knew of the Space In-Between*, 2019. Gouache, watercolor, watercolor pencil, acrylic ink and a peacock feather on paper, 63 x 32 in. Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco.

# ALBERT CHONG

Albert Chong (b. 1958, Jamaica) immigrated to the US in 1977. He attended the School of Visual Arts in New York, where he received a BFA with honors in 1981. He received his MFA from the University of California, San Diego in 1991, and in the same year accepted a faculty appointment at the University of Colorado Boulder. He has also taught photography at the School of Visual Arts in New York; Mira Costa College in Oceanside, California; Stanford University in California; and the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island. Chong is presently a professor of art at the University of Colorado in Boulder, where he teaches photography.

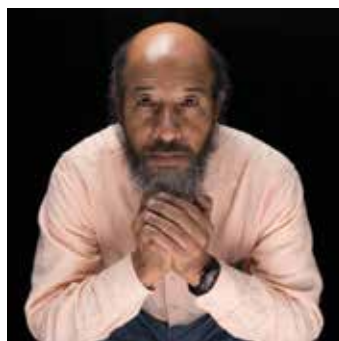
Chong has received various awards for his work in the visual arts. These include individual artist fellowships from the states of New York, California, and Colorado, and a 1992 Individual Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1998, he was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship in the field of photography and the Pollock Krasner Grant. Chong has been commissioned by Absolut Vodka to add his work to the ongoing series in the work titled *Absolut Chong*.

Chong's art, in whatever form, has been a constant presence in museums and galleries internationally for the last three decades. His work has contributed to the discourse around race, identity, and spirituality in art; it's in public, private, and corporate collections; and has been featured in publications, books, and periodicals too numerous to mention. He has represented his home country, Jamaica, in many international biennials, and national and international exhibitions, including the 2001 Venice Biennale, the 1998 Sao Paulo Biennale, the first Johannesburg Biennial titled *Africus* in South Africa in 1995, and the seventh Havana Biennial in Cuba in 2000.

## Artist Statement

Albert Chong is a contemporary artist working in the mediums of photography, installation, and mixed media art. He is the last child from a large family of shopkeepers/merchants with Afro-Chinese Jamaican parents. He currently resides in Boulder, Colorado, and Harkers Hall, St. Catherine, Jamaica.

His works have referenced personal mysticism, spirituality, race, identity and African retentions in art, life and religious practice. His work in photography spans many genres and sometimes utilizes found, appropriated and familial photographs, as well as many types of objects primarily of an organic nature that serve as shamanic talismans and symbolic and referential signifiers. These works aspire to visually embed the narratives of race and ethnicity with the aesthetic whimsy required to sublimate and catalyze meaning and references. These works use analog and digital layering to create the sometimes dense but usually simple arrangements that infer, relate, connect and signify the complex nature of the struggles of the displaced peoples of the Asian and African diaspora.





Albert Chong, *The Natural Mystic*, 1982. Archival pigment print on canvas, 36 x 36 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Albert Chong, *Blessing the Throne*, 1993. Gelatin silver print, 50 x 61 x 2 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Albert Chong, *Self-Portrait with Baboon Skull*, 1995. Gelatin silver print, 39 x 49 x 3 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Albert Chong, *Self-Portrait with Eggs*, 1987. Gelatin silver print, 50 x 50 x 4.5 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# EDOUARD DUVAL-CARRIÉ

Edouard Duval-Carrié was born and raised in Haiti, and lived in Puerto Rico, New York, Montreal, Paris, and Miami. Parallels thus emerge between the artist's cosmopolitan lifestyle and his artistic sensitivity toward the multifaceted identities that form his native Haiti. Duval-Carrié's art challenges the viewer to make meaning of dense iconography derived from Caribbean history, politics, and religion. His mixed media works and installations present migrations and transformations, often human and spiritual. At their most fundamental, Duval-Carrié's works ask the viewer to complicate the Western canon, to consider how Africa has shaped the Americas, and how the Caribbean has shaped the modern world. His works have been exhibited in major museums, art institutions and galleries in Africa, Europe and the Americas. Duval-Carrié creates works that speak to the complexities of the Caribbean and its diaspora. In 2020, he received the Oolite Arts Michael Richards Award, given to a Miami-based artist who has cultivated an original practice over a long period of time.



Carl Juste

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2020 *King Henri and Haiti's Royal Court*, 2019, on long-term view at The Bass, Miami, FL.
- 2019 *The Art of Embedded Histories*, Cohen Gallery, Brown University, Providence, RI.
- 2019 *The Saga of the Baobab*, Musée des Civilization Noir, Dakar, Senegal.
- 2018 *Baobab Senegal*, special commission, Musee des Civilisations Noires, Dakar, Senegal.
- 2018 *Decolonizing Refinement: Contemporary Pursuits in the Art of Edouard Duval-Carrié*, University Galleries, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL.
- 2018 *The Art of Haiti*, Fine Arts Center, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO.
- 2018 *Mémoires Encastrées/Memory Windows*, Miami International Airport, Miami, FL.

## Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2020 *Open Storage: Selections from the Collection & Works on Loan*, The Bass, Miami, FL.
- 2019 *Creating Dangerously: Art and Revolution*, Haiti tribute, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, CT.
- 2018 *Relational Undercurrents Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, MOLAA, Long Beach California; Wallach Gallery, Columbia University, New York; Frost Museum, Florida International University, Miami, FL.
- 2018 *Bordering the Imaginary, Art from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Their Diasporas*, Bric House, Brooklyn, NY.



Edouard Duval Carrié, *Beasts of Burden*, 2021. Aluminum, acrylic, and glitter glue, 96 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# CARLOS ESTÉVEZ

Carlos Estévez (b. 1969, Cuba). Estévez graduated from the University of Arts (ISA) in Havana. In 2004, he moved to Miami. The artist is the recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Cintas Foundation Fellowship in Visual Arts and the Grand Prize in the First Salon of Contemporary Cuban Art in Havana.

His work is included in the National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana, Cuba; Museum of Fine Art, Boston, MA; The Ludwig Forum, Aachen, Germany; the Bronx Museum, Bronx, NY; Pérez Art Museum, Miami, FL; Drammens Museum for Kunst of Kulturhistorie, Norway; Tucson Museum of Art, Arizona; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CO; Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, AZ Fort Lauderdale Art Museum, Ft Lauderdale, FL The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum at FIU, Miami, FL; the Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC; BNY Mellon Art Collection, New York, NY; and the Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, FL.



## Artist Statement

The source of my work is human existence. Of course, my work is influenced by what I read, which is mainly philosophy. However, I don't transfer any concept to my art intentionally. It does not work that way. I read a book and I use it as fuel for my brain. What I get from readings could be far from its original intentions. I do my own interpretation, and this becomes the inspiration for my work. I never know exactly what, how, and when it is going to happen, but one day an image appears that is connected with something I have read.

I work in different media: painting, sculpture, drawing, installation, and finding objects. I jump from one to the other, and this sequence is interrupted constantly. The work that I do reflects my inner world, and it must be done with all the complexity that this process requires. That is why it needs to be very detailed. Every single element is important: the background images, colors, textures, lines and the title.



Carlos Estévez, *Portable Universe*, 2020. Wood, paper, string, and ribbon, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.



Carlos Estévez, *Portable Universe*, 2020. Wood, paper, string, and ribbon, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.



Carlos Estévez, *Portable Universe*, 2020. Wood, paper, string, and ribbon, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

# LAURA FACEY

(b. 1954, Kingston, Jamaica)

## Artist Statement

Controversial. Powerful. Honest. These key words describe sculptor Laura Facey and her work that has spanned over a forty-year career. Laura interprets the energy of the earth, the lush vegetation and the constant river at her home in St. Ann, Jamaica. She takes the strength, beauty and history of the land combined with her personal spiritual alchemy and translates it into storytelling creations—sculpture as a soul-journey through pain into light—taking in life and breathing out love.

*"In the process of confronting her own shadows, she has become what Jung referred to as a 'visionary artist': a conduit offering access to an inner terrain. Laura's themes transform and heal, adding a unique quality to her work."*

—Anne Errey, artist, curator, and writer



Laura Facey, *Guide Their Way Home*, 2021. Artwork in progress.

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

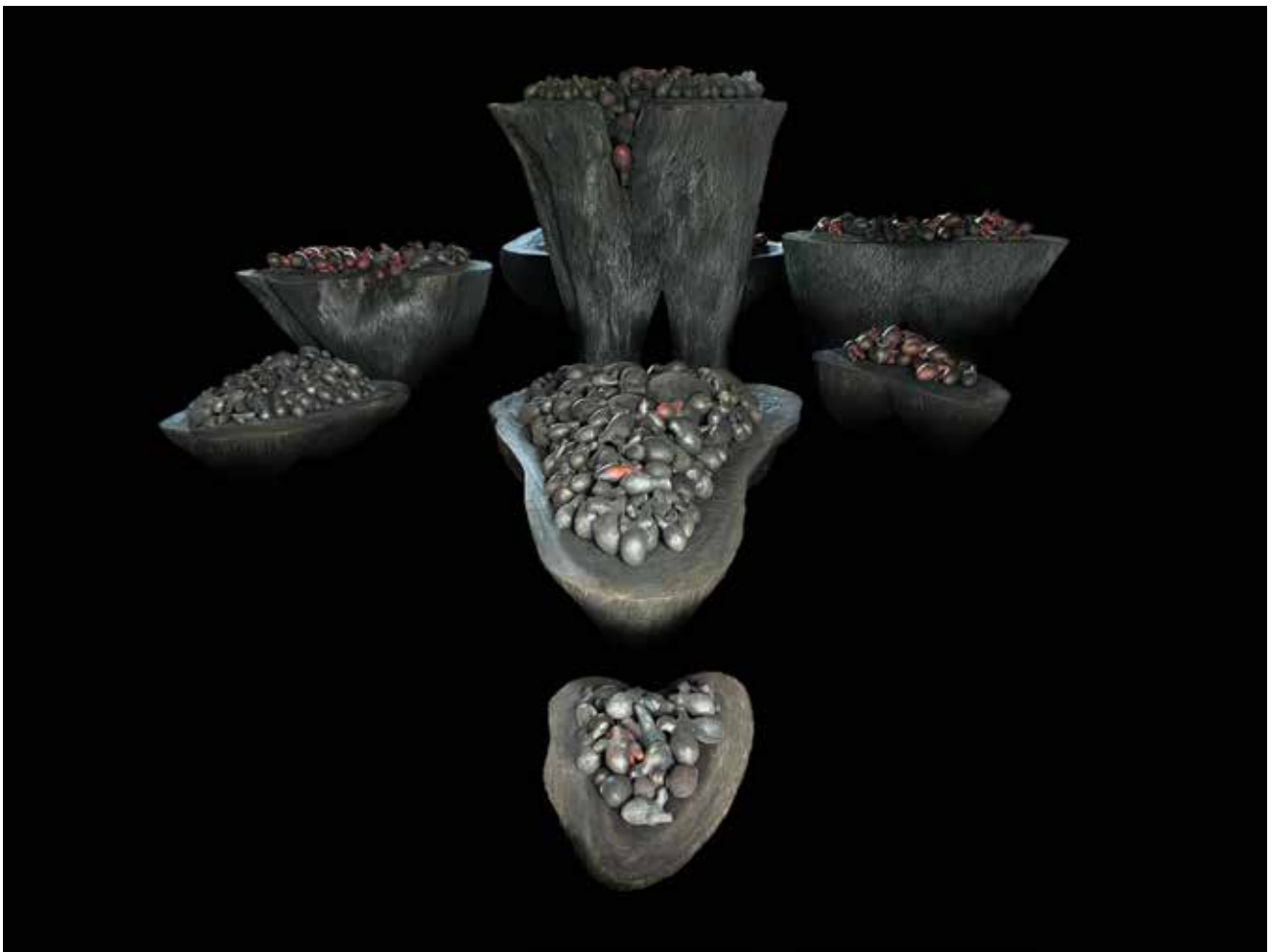
- 2014 *Their Spirits*, International Slavery Museum, Liverpool, UK.
- 2013 *Radiant Earth*, The Prince's School of Traditional Arts, London, UK.
- 2011 *Radiant Combs*, new sculpture and drawings, Mt. Plenty, St. Ann, Jamaica.
- 2010 *Propel*, Roktowa, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 2008 *Where I Stand*, Mt. Plenty, St. Ann, Jamaica.
- 2006 *The Everything Doors*, drawings in wood, Institute of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 2001 *Silent Voices*, Bolivar Gallery, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 1992 *Chairworm and Supershark*, exhibition of illustrations, Patoo Gallery, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 1985 *Pieces*, Mutual Life Gallery, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 1980 *Works*, Tom Martin Gallery, Sante Fe, NM.
- 1976 *Talisman the Goat*, exhibition of illustrations, Bolivar Gallery, Kingston, Jamaica.

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2004 National Gallery: Jamaica Biennial, 2010–2017.
- 2012 Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC.
- 2011 *International Festival of Contemporary Sculpture*, Roux, France.
- 2011 *Spirit of Jamaica*, Black Circle Gallery, London, UK.
- 2011 *About Change*, the World Bank, Washington, DC.
- 2010 *Art Jamaica*, New Hall, Cambridge, UK.
- 2004 *Curator's Eye 1*, "Body and Blood of Christ," National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 2001 *A Shriek from an Invisible Box*, Meguro Museum of Arts, Tokyo, Japan.
- 2000 *Watamula*, workshop exhibition, Curaçao, Dutch Antilles.
- 2000 *Soon Come: The Art of Contemporary Jamaica*, Nebraska Arts Council.
- 1997 *Sexta Bienal de la Habana*, Cuba.
- 1990 *Laura Facey & Cecil Ward*, Patoo Gallery, Kingston, Jamaica.
- 1986 *Caribbean Art Now*, Commonwealth Institute, London.
- 1985 *Six Options* (Installations), National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica.

## Awards

2014: Jamaican National honour of the Order of Distinction in the rank of Commander (CD); 2010: Aaron Matalon Award, best in show, National Biennial, National Gallery of Jamaica; 2006: Silver Musgrave Medal for sculpture.



Laura Facey, *Guide Their Way Home*, 2021. Guango, cedar, mahogany, and video accompaniment, 29 x 27 x 16 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# SCHEREZADE GARCIA

Scherezade García is a painter, printmaker, and installation artist whose work often explores allegories of history, migration, collective and ancestral memory, and cultural colonization and politics. A co-founder of the Dominican York Proyecto GRÁFICA, she holds an AAS from Altos de Chavón School of Design, a BFA from Parsons School of Design | The New School, and an MFA from The City College of New York, CUNY. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Art Museum of the Americas, El Museo del Barrio, The Housatonic Museum of Art, El Museo de Arte Moderno in Santo Domingo, and others.

García is the recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant (2015) and the Colene Brown Art Prize (2020). An edited monograph on her work *Scherezade García: From This Side of the Atlantic* was published in 2020 by the Art Museum of the Americas. She is a member of the Artist Advisory Council of Arts Connection and No Longer Empty. She sits on the Board of Directors of the College Art Association (2020-2024).

García is represented by Praxis Art Gallery in New York and by IBIS Art Gallery in New Orleans. Her artist's papers can be found at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. She currently lives in Brooklyn, NY, and Austin, TX.

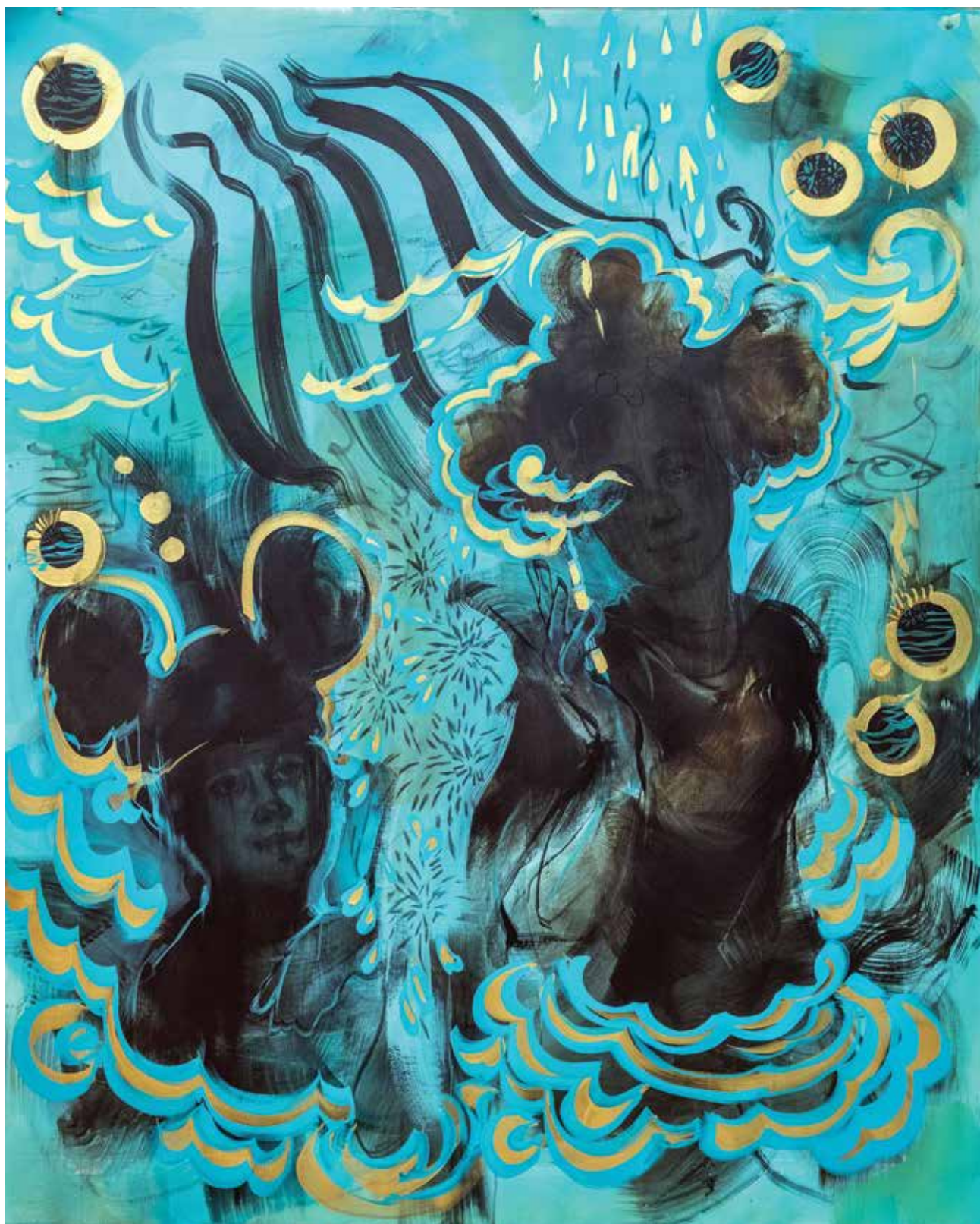


## Artist Statement

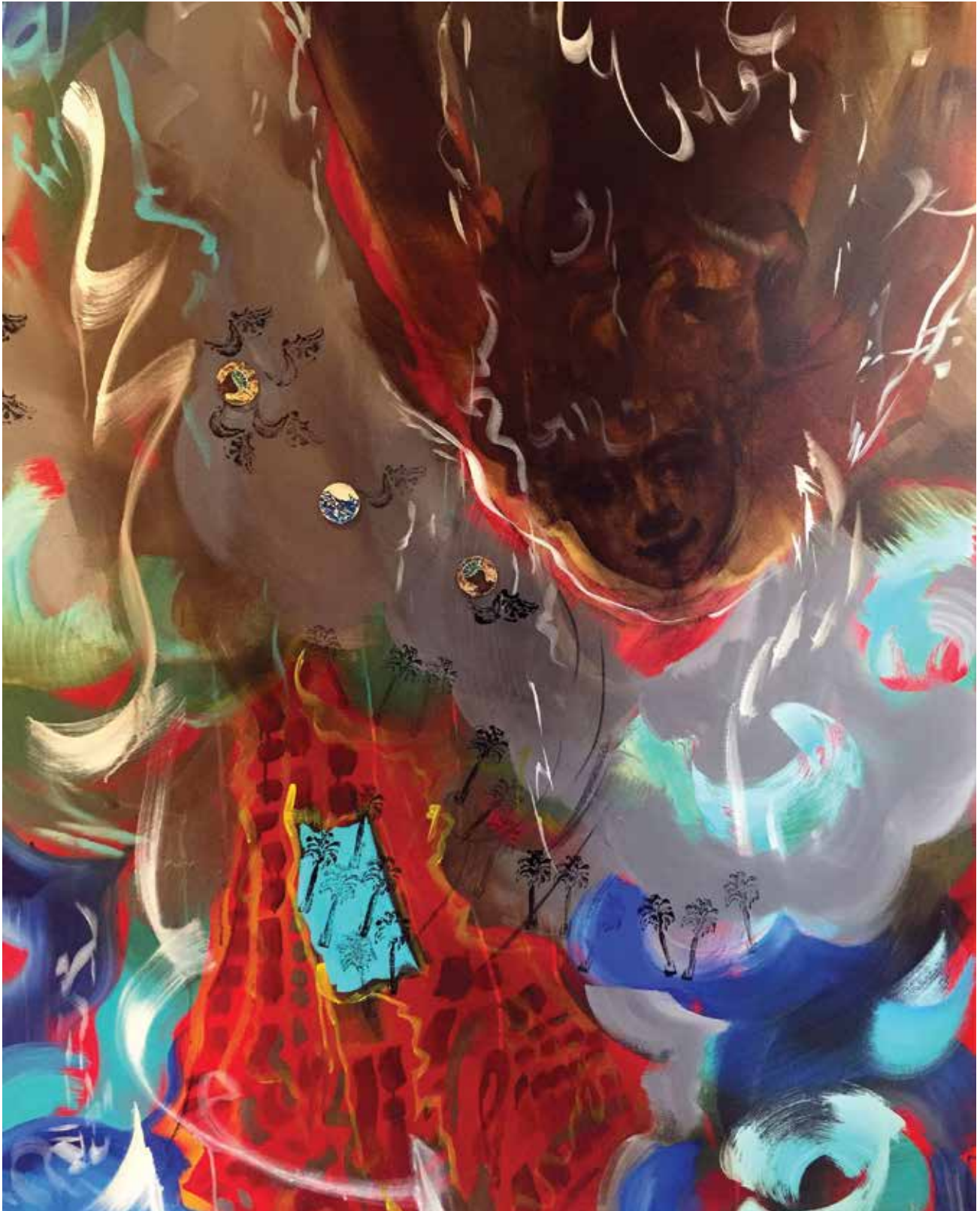
As a Latinx contemporary artist, my work is concerned with creating narratives that are essential to the understanding of the Americas and the American experience. My work intends to unveil the many ongoing cultural encounters that continuously shape and reshape how we view, perceive, and color America. My work is centered on the politics of inclusion. Race, the politics of color (formally and conceptually), is essential to me. The cinnamon figure has been a constant in my work since 1996. Mixing all the colors in a palette is an inclusive action; the outcome of such activity is cinnamon color. The new race, represented by my ever-present cinnamon figure, states the creation of a new aesthetic. This unique aesthetic with new rules originated from the lush landscape, the transplantation, appropriation, and transformation of traditions. History plays a central role in my artistic practice of decoding and deconstructing visual narratives of power. I engage history and historical ethnography to pay close attention to traditions, methods, and dominant societal points of view to visually bring forth other voices. Through the deconstruction, the juxtaposition of symbols of constructed Americanness, nationhood, and freedom embedded in slavery and oppression, I aim to present the most outrageous signs of resistance through the mixing of race, through fierce optimism.



Scherezade Garcia, *Paradise According to the Tropics II*, from the series *Super Tropics*, 2014. Acrylic, pigment, charcoal, ink, collage on canvas, 51 x 75 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Scherezade Garcia, *America: Borders and Fireworks*, from the series *It's So Sunny that it's Dark*, 2017. Acrylic, charcoal, ink on linen, 72 x 64 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Scherezade Garcia, *From a island to another II*, from series *Super Tropics*, 2015. Acrylic, pigment, charcoal, ink, clear plastic roundels, 72 x 48 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# MARÍA ELENA GONZÁLEZ

Cuban-born artist María Elena González (b. 1957) is an internationally recognized sculptor based in Brooklyn, NY, and Oakland, CA. González interweaves the conceptual with a strong dedication to craft in her complex installations and poetic arrangements, exploring themes like identity, memory, and dislocation. Over a career spanning thirty years, she has won the Prix de Rome (2003) and Grand Prize at the 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts at Ljubljana, Slovenia (2013). She was a Guggenheim Fellow (2006) and has been awarded grants from numerous foundations, including Pollock-Krasner, Joan Mitchell, New York Foundation for the Arts, and Penny McCall. She has served as the Sculpture Commissioner for New York City's Design Commission, and has also taught at Cooper Union School of Art and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, among others. González is a tenured professor at the San Francisco Art Institute. In 1999, González received widespread acclaim for her site-specific sculpture *Magic Carpet/Home*, commissioned by the Public Art Fund, and another site-specific work titled *You & Me* (2010), commissioned by Storm King Art Center. González's work can be found in numerous public collections, including the Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland; Museum voor Modern Kunst, Arnhem, the Netherlands; Museum of Art, the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI; the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.



## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 *Tree Talk*, Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro, VT.  
*Tree Talk*, Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA.
- 2015 *Tree Talk*, Cankarjev dom Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia.  
*Supine Tendency*, The Project, New York, NY.
- 2006 *Nani's House*, The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, HI.
- 2002 *UN Real Estates*, DiverseWorks, Houston, TX, [traveled to Art Museum of University of Memphis, TN; Art in General, New York, NY].  
*María Elena González: Selected Works 1996–2002*, The Center for Art and Visual Culture, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, MD.
- 2000 *Mnemonic Architecture*, The Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, Havana, Cuba.
- 1999 *Resting Spots*, The Project, New York, NY.
- 1996 *The Persistence of Sorrow*, Contemporanea Series, project room, El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY.

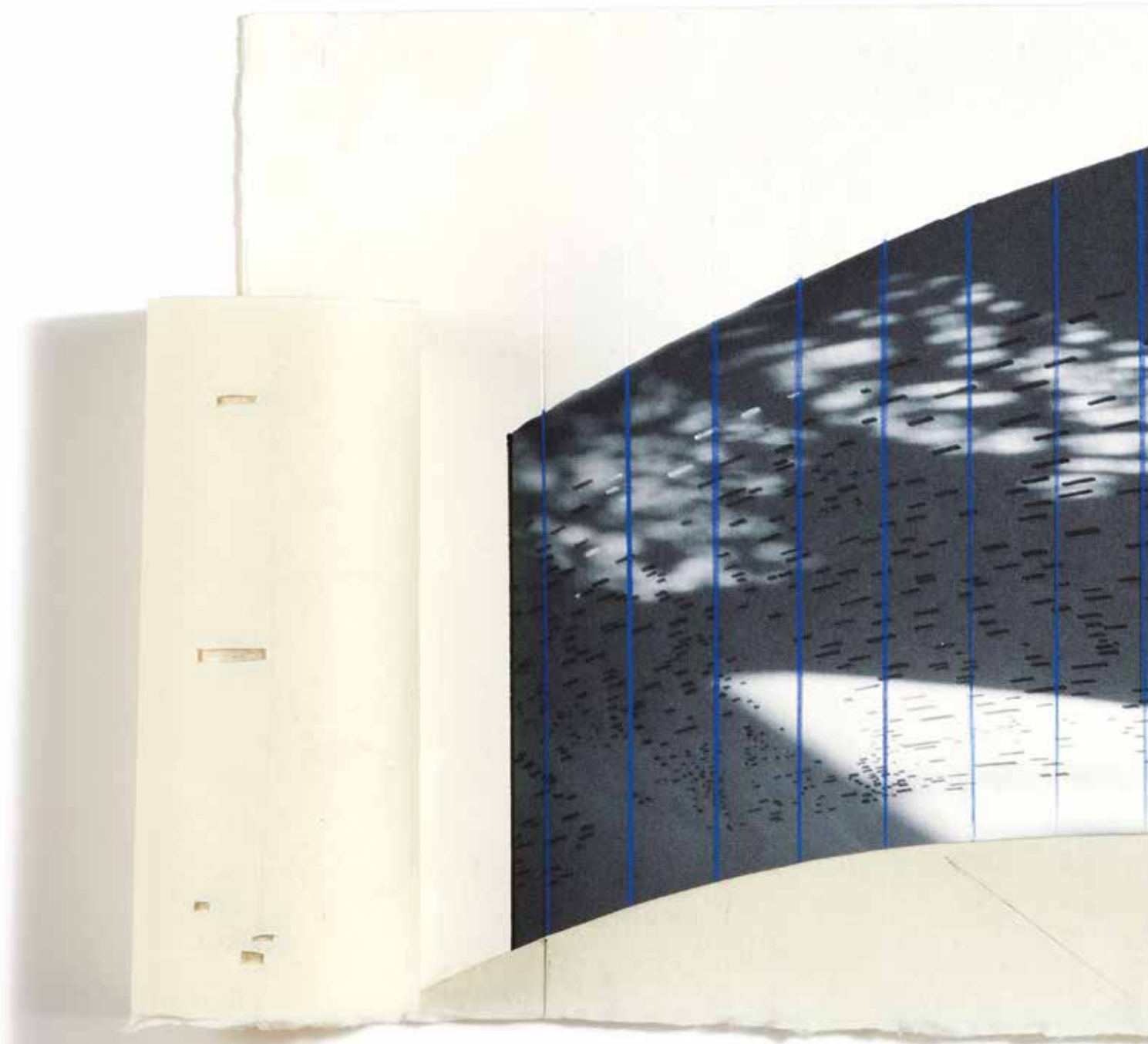
## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *Beyond the Sounds of Silence*, Lowe Museum Art, Miami, FL.  
*Sonic Terrains in Latinx Art*, Vincent Price Art Museum, Monterey Park, CA.
- 2019 *About Face: Stonewall, Revolt and New Queer Art*, Wrightwood 659, Chicago, IL.
- 2017 *Home – So Different, So Appealing*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA.  
*Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA.
- 2013 *The 30th Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts*, MGLC-International Centre for Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- 2010 *5 + 5: New Perspectives*, Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY.
- 2007 *The Shapes of Space*, Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY.
- 2004 *Open House; Working in Brooklyn*, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.
- 2003 *Site and Insight: an Assemblage of Artists*, PS1, New York, NY.
- 2001 *Crossing The Line*, Queens Museum of Art, New York, NY.
- 2000 *Greater New York*, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, NY.
- 1996 *Domestic Partnerships*, Art in General, New York, NY.
- 1991 *Cadences: Icons and Abstraction in Context*, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY.

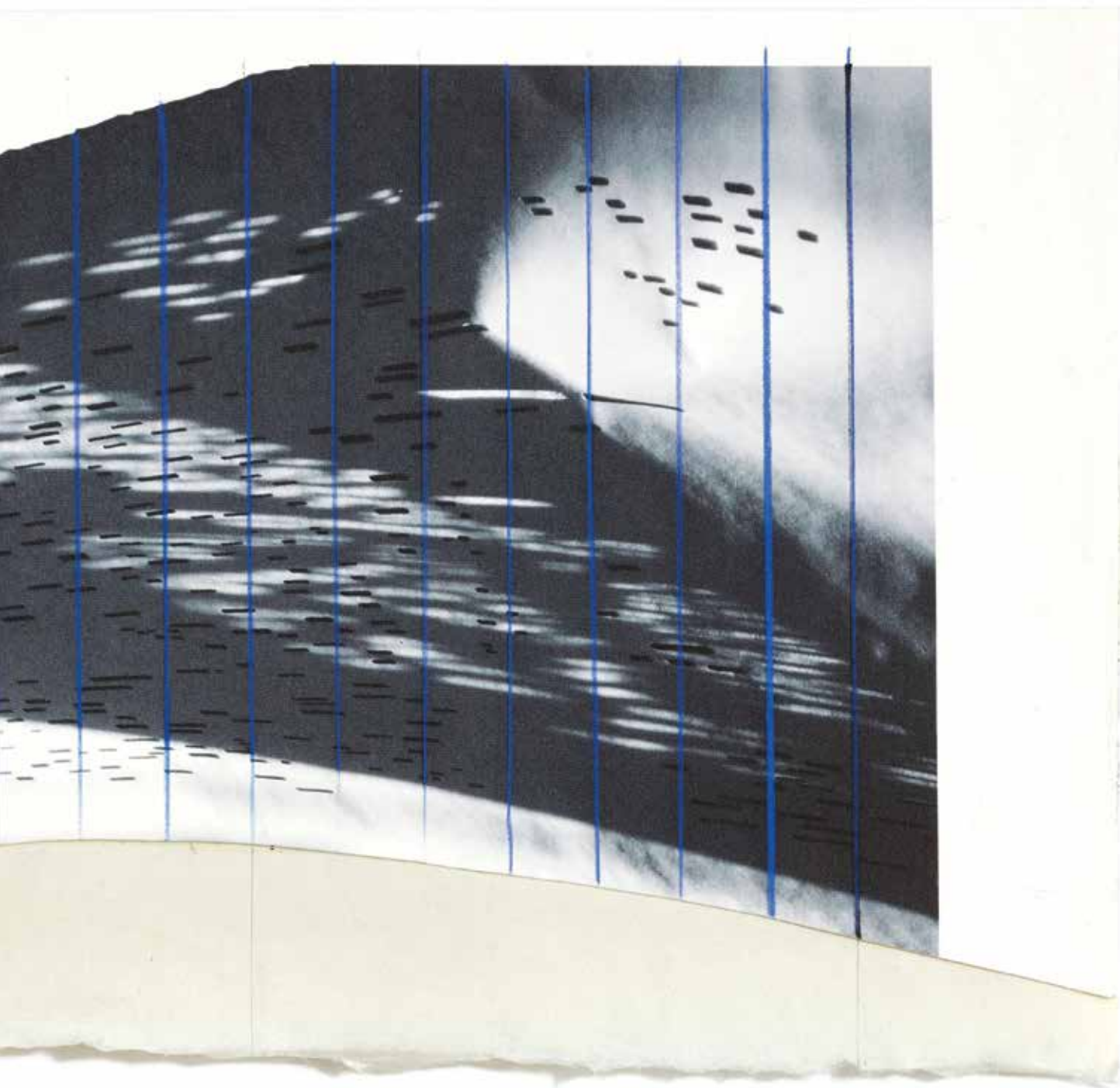


María Elena González, *Vitrine (Capsule)*, 2017. Steel, glass, and porcelain, 72 x 24 x 24 in. Courtesy of the artist and Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York.





María Elena González, *Spread-Roll*, 2016. Ink and ink jet, graphite, and colored pencil on Rives BFK and Japanese papers, 8 x 17 x 2 in. Courtesy of the artist and Hirschl & Adler Modern, New York.



# ALEJANDRO GUZMÁN

Alex Guzmán received his BA from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and his MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine in 2012. He has had recent exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, the Bronx Museum, El Museo Del Barrio, the Faena Forum, the Calder Foundation, the Queens Museum, BRIC, the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, the Toledo Museum of Art, Taller Boricua, and the Times Art Museum. Guzmán has held residencies at the LMCC in New York; the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA; MadArt in Seattle, WA; the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program in Brooklyn, NY; the New Roots Foundation in Guatemala; and the Headlands Center for the Arts in California.



Elia Alba, *The Allegorist (Alejandro Guzman)*, as part of *The Supper Club Series*, © Elia Alba.

## Artist Statement

Guzmán investigates through performance, sculptures, drawing, painting and video that have an active life as catalysts. His artistic goal is to generate unexpected exchanges in the realm of everyday public spaces and in artspaces. Alejandro aims to inspire *Creative Misunderstandings*; an examination of human interaction with abstracted forms, ritualized actions, and the participants' emotional and intellectual response through the lens of their own personal history and traditions in culture and society. Functioning as mobile sites of reflection and contemplation, his performance embodies a new form of masquerade that invites the audience to shed their inhibitions and freely engage in their surroundings with other people and ideas. The participants are moved to take part in an ecstatic fellowship that celebrates shared histories. Taking a physical approach to interaction, Guzmán's practice is as playful as it is deeply confrontational.



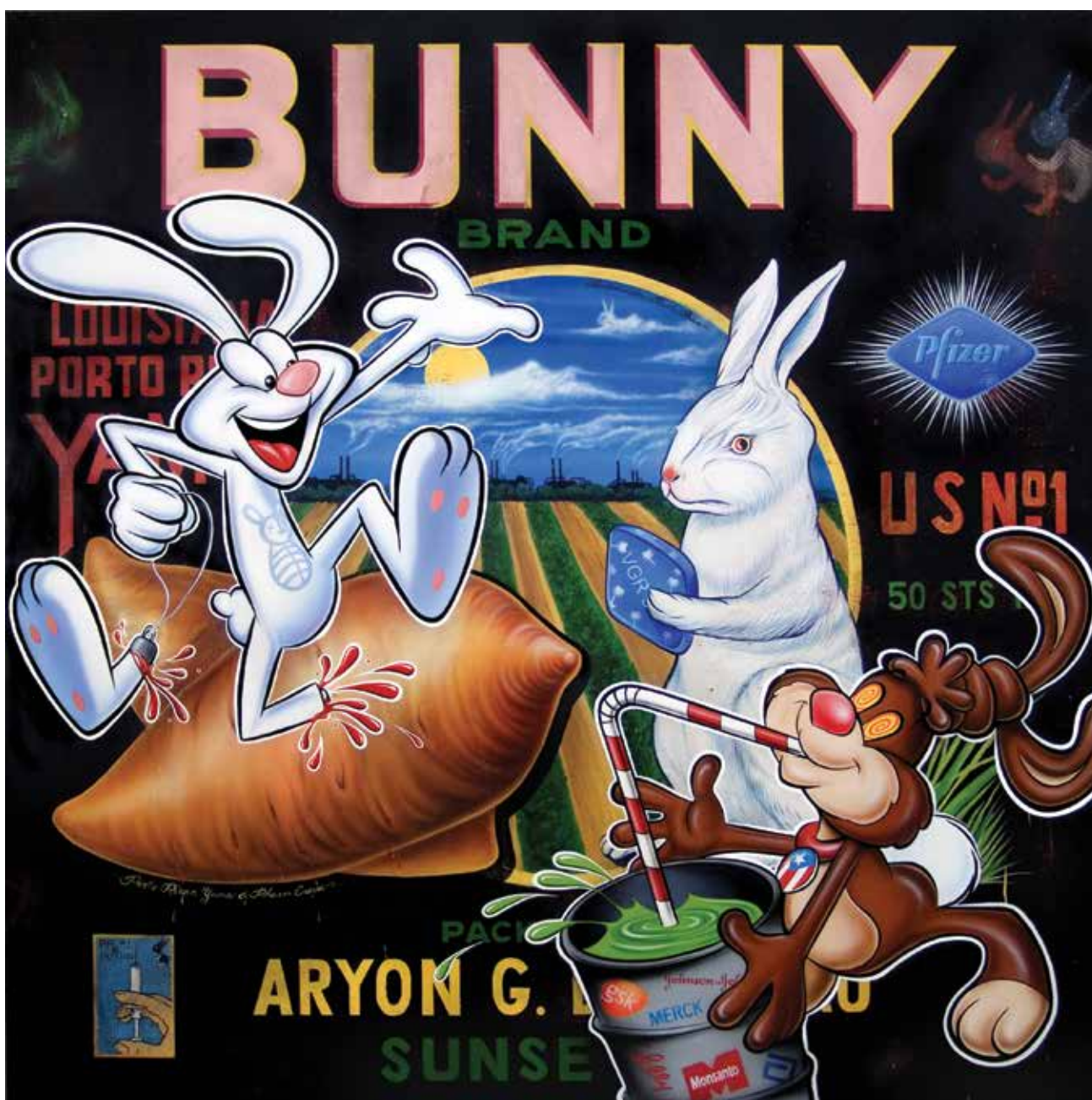
Alejandro Guzmán, *Return of the Intellectual Derelict*, 2022. Mixed media, Approx. 36 x 41 x 96 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# MIGUEL LUCIANO

Miguel Luciano (b. 1972, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is a multimedia artist whose work explores popular culture, history and social justice through painting, sculpture and socially engaged public art projects. Luciano received his BFA from New World School of the Arts in Miami, and an MFA from the University of Florida. He has received numerous grants and awards, including the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Award, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award Grant, and the Socially Engaged Art Fellowship from A Blade of Grass. He was an inaugural artist-in-residence in the Civic Practice Partnership Residency at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and is a recipient of the Latinx Art Fellowship supported by the US Latinx Art Forum, the Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Luciano is a faculty member at the School of Visual Arts in New York and at the Yale University School of Art. He lives and works in East Harlem, New York.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Cemí-Libre* (2021)—a pop-up exhibition in East Harlem featuring work produced in the Civic Practice Partnership Artist Residency program with The Metropolitan Museum of Art; and *Ride or Die* (2017) at BRIC in Brooklyn, NY. Luciano's work has been featured in group exhibitions at The Mercosul Biennial, Brazil; La Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris; El Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City; El Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de la Habana, Cuba; The San Juan Poly-Graphic Triennial, Puerto Rico, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, and The Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC. His work is featured in the permanent collections of The Smithsonian American Art Museum, The National Museum of African American History and Culture, The Brooklyn Museum, El Museo del Barrio, the Newark Museum, and the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico.





Miguel Luciano, *Barceloneta Bunnies*, 2007. Acrylic on canvas over panel, 72 x 72 x 3 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Miguel Luciano, *RUN-A-BOUT*, 2017. 1969 Schwinn Run-A-Bout bicycle, restored and customized, chrome-plated machete, flags, 48 x 60 x 26 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Chaz Langley.



Miguel Luciano, *RUN-A-BOUT* (detail), 2017. 1969 Schwinn Run-A-Bout bicycle, restored and customized, chrome-plated machete, flags, 48 x 60 x 26 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Chaz Langley.

# RENLUKA MAHARAJ

Renluka Maharaj was born in Trinidad and Tobago, and works between Colorado, New York, and Trinidad. Ms. Maharaj earned her MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has received numerous awards, including the Martha Kate Thomas Fund, the Presidential Scholarship at Anderson Ranch Center and the Barbara De Genevieve Scholarship. Her works are in institutional collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, the Joan Flasch artist book collection, Los Angeles Center for Digital Art, the special collections at the University of Colorado Boulder, as well as numerous private collections. Her work has appeared in *Hyperallergic*, *Elle India*, *Harper's Bazaar India*, *Juxtapox* and *New American Paintings*. Currently she is on residency at Project for Empty Space in New Jersey. She has an upcoming solo exhibition in Marfa, Texas, and Newark, New Jersey, as well as several group exhibitions in 2022.

## Artist Statement

Working with photography, installations, research and travel, my work, which is often autobiographical, investigates themes of history, memory, religion and gender, and how they inform identity. My grandparents entered Trinidad and Tobago as indentured laborers from India to work on sugar plantations under the British, and this has been a point of departure for ongoing dialogue and research.



## Selected Upcoming Exhibitions

- 2022 Solo show, Rule Gallery, Marfa, TX.  
Solo show, Project For Empty Space, Newark, NJ.  
Welancora Gallery, Brooklyn, NY.  
Colorado Fine Arts Center, Colorado Springs, CO.  
*Made in Paint*, Golden Art Foundation, New Berlin, NY.  
*Ankhlave Garden Project*, Flux Factory, LIC, NY.

## Selected Exhibition History

- 2021 *More is More*, Akron Art Museum, Akron, OH.  
*Sonder*, McColl Center, Charlotte, NC.  
*Far and Familiar*, Rice Gallery, San Francisco, CA.  
*Pelting Mangoes*, Artworks Gallery, Loveland, CO.
- 2020 *Pelting Mangoes*, Flsxt Gallery, Chicago, IL.  
*Right To Herself*, Lincoln Center Gallery, Fort Collins, CO.
- 2019 *Home Is A Place Called Home*, Rule Gallery, Denver, CO.  
*The New Unnatural*, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, IL.
- 2018 *A Violence*, Pulse Art Fair, Miami Beach, FL.  
*Contemporary Photography*, Site Brooklyn, Brooklyn, NY.  
*Mnemonic*, H Gallery, Ventura, CA.
- 2017 *Expo Chicago*, Chicago, IL.
- 2016 Institut fur Alles Mogliche, Berlin, Germany.  
*Learning to see Color*, Vicki Myhren Gallery, Denver CO.
- 2015 *Juried Art Show*, Kinsey Institute, Gruenwald Gallery, Bloomington, IN.



Renluka Maharaj, *Because Of You I Am*, 2021. Acrylic paint on pigmented ink print, 40 x 60 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Renluka Maharaj, *Guardians Of Our Stories*, 2021. Acrylic paint on pigmented ink print, 40 x 60 in. Courtesy of the artist.



Renluka Maharaj, *Through Space And Time*, 2021. Acrylic paint on pigmented ink print, 36.5 x 60. Courtesy of Brigitte Garner.

# TIRZO MARTHA

*"When you cannot describe it with a pen, imagination will not only visualize it for you but it will also make it possible for you to grope it."*

—Tirzo Martha

Tirzo Martha (b. 1965, Curaçao) makes sculptures, videos, and performances. His work is an accumulation and composite of objects and construction materials. Most of the objects in his arsenal come from the construction world or from our daily lives.

His work has been included in exhibitions such as *Infinite Island*, Brooklyn Museum, New York; *ArtZuid*, Sculpture Biennial, Amsterdam; the Kunsthall Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Museum of Modern Art Arnhem, the Netherlands; the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; the Havana Biennial, Cuba; *Refresh*, Amsterdam Museum, the Netherlands; *Caribbean Crossroads of the World*, Queens Museum of Art, New York; 6th Biennial of Curitiba, Brazil; *The Global Contemporary: Art Worlds*, Museum of Contemporary Arts ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; 1st International Triennial of the Caribbean, Museo de Arte Moderno, Dominican Republic; *Caribbean Crosscurrents*, Art Miami; and the Moscow Biennial, Russia.

The artist was awarded the Werkbijdrage bewezen Talent stipend by the Mondriaan Fund in the Netherlands, and the Wilhelminaring Award for oeuvre in sculpture also in the Netherlands. He was proclaimed Dutch Master for visual arts in the Netherlands, and awarded the Cola Debrot Prize for culture, the highest cultural prize by the Government of Curaçao; as well as receiving the Reed Foundation Award in New York.

In 2006, Martha, in collaboration with the artist David Bade, founded the Instituto Buena Vista in Curaçao. This institute provides a platform for both a preliminary art education for youngsters, and a center for contemporary art that simultaneously stimulates awareness and enrichment of the local art and cultural heritage. Since 2016, IBB and Kunsthall Rotterdam have started a structural collaboration under the name of AYCA (All You Can Art).





Tirzo Martha, *The auto Self-portrait of a culture*, 2017. Wooden sculptures, screw, construction foam, wooden chair, afro combs, porcelain house and a lamp, Approx. 48 x 48 x 72 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# JOIRI MINAYA

Joiri Minaya (b. 1990) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work navigates binaries in search of in-betweenness, investigating the female body within constructions of identity, multicultural social spaces, and hierarchies. Recent works focus on questioning historic and contemporary representations of Black and Brown womanhood in relation to an imagined tropical identity from a decolonial stance.

Born in New York, she grew up in the Dominican Republic. She graduated from the Escuela Nacional de Artes Visuales of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic (2009), the Altos de Chavón School of Design (2011) and Parsons the New School for Design (2013).

She has participated in residencies like Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Guttenberg Arts, Smack Mellon, BronxArtSpace, Bronx Museum AIM Program, the NYFA Mentoring Program for Immigrant Artists, Transmedia Lab at MA Scène Nationale, Red Bull House of Art Detroit, Lower East Side Printshop, Art Omi, ISCP and the Vermont Studio Center.

Minaya has exhibited internationally across the Caribbean and the US. She is a grantee from Jerome Hill, BRIC's Colene Brown Art Prize, Artadia, the Nancy Graves Foundation, the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, Socrates Sculpture Park Emerging Artist Fellowship, the Great prize and the Audience Award XXV Concurso de Arte Eduardo León Jimenes, the Exhibition Prize Centro de la Imagen (Dominican Republic), and the Great Prize of the XXVII Biennial at the Museo de Arte Moderno (Dominican Republic). Minaya's work is in the collections of the Santo Domingo Museo de Arte Moderno, the Centro León Jiménez, the Kemper Museum, El Museo del Barrio and several private collections.



Joel Gaal, courtesy of Red Bull House of Art

## Selected Exhibition History

- 2021 *Difference Machines*, Albright-Knox Museum, Buffalo, NY.  
*The Gate* by Imagine the City, public space exhibition, Hamburg, Germany.  
*Staying with the Trouble*, Tufts University, Boston, MA.  
*Cuando cambia el mundo*, Centro Cultural Kirchner, BA, Argentina.  
*El Momento del Yagrumo*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico.  
*Seascape Poetics*, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.  
*Notes for Tomorrow*, Pera Museum, Istanbul, Turkey; Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, China.  
*Marking Monuments*, University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, FL.
- 2020 *To cast too bold a shadow*, The 8th Floor / Rubin Foundation, NY.  
*You Are Beautiful The Way You Are*, public art exhibit in the streets of Dakar, Senegal.  
*12th Bienal Mercosur (Femeninos: acciones, visualidades y afectos)*, Puerto Alegre, Brasil.  
*Divergences*, Kemper Museum, Kansas City, MO.  
*I'm here to entertain you, but only during my shift*, Baxter Street Camera Club, New York.
- 2019 *Joiri Minaya: Labadee*, The Blanton Museum, Austin, TX.  
*Joiri Minaya: Gazing Back*, University Hall Gallery, UMass Boston, Boston, MA.  
*The Cloaking (of Ponce and Columbus)*, Biscayne Blvd. & Bayfront Park, Miami, FL.  
*Resisting Paradise*, Espacio Pública, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Darling Foundry, Montreal, Canada.  
*Photography at its Limits*, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX.  
*Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, Portland Museum of Art, ME, and in 2017 at the Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA.



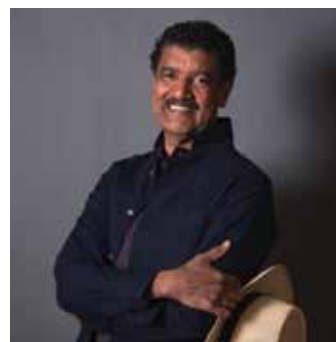
Joiiri Minaya, *#dominicanwomengooglesearch*, 2016. UV print on Sintra and fabric collage, approx. 72 x 240 x 240 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Stefan Hagen.

# PEPÓN OSORIO

(b. 1955, Santurce, Puerto Rico)

## Selected Exhibition History

- 2019 *Making Knowing: Craft In Art, 1950 – 2019*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.
- 2017 *Abject/Object Empathies*, Cornell Council for the Arts Biennial, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.  
*Side by Side*, Cornell Council for the Arts Biennial, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.  
*Home – So Different, So Appealing: Art from the Americas since 1957*, Los Angeles Museum of Modern Art, Los Angeles, CA.  
*Art on the Front Lines*, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, NY.
- 2015 *reForm*, commissioned by Temple Contemporary, University Classroom at Temple University's Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2014 *Our America: The Latino Presence in American Art*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC.
- 2013 *Changing Scenes: Points of View in Contemporary Media Art*, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA.  
*NYC 1993: Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star*, New Museum, New York, NY.  
*Everyday Things: Contemporary Works from the Collection*, Museum of Art, RISD, Providence, RI.
- 2012 *Who More Sci-Fi Than Us*, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, the Netherlands.  
*Con los santos no se juega/Don't Mess with the Saint*, University Galleries, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ.  
*Resting Stops: An Alternative Pilgrimage*, in conjunction with smARTpower, Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre, Patan Museum, Nepal.
- 2010 *Primera Trienal Internacional del Caribe*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
- 2010 *Graphic Unconscious*, Philagrafika 2010, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2008 *NeoHooDoo: Art for a Forgotten Faith*, The Menil Collection, Houston, TX, and MoMA PS1, Contemporary Arts Center, Long Island City, NY and Miami Art Museum, Miami, FL.
- 2006 *Parque do Ibirapuera*, 27th Sao Paulo Biennial, Sao Paulo, Brazil.  
*The Skowhegan School of Painting And Sculpture: 60 Years*, Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME.





Pepón Osorio, *Lonely Soul*, 2008. Wooden crutches, fiberglass, wood, styrofoam, resin, pins, wheelchair wheels, approx. 106 x 83 x 77 in. Courtesy of the artist.

# JUAN SÁNCHEZ

Born to working-class Puerto Rican immigrants in Brooklyn, New York, Juan Sánchez is an influential American visual artist, and one of the most important Nuyorican cultural figures of the latter twentieth century. Maintaining an activist stance for over four decades, his art is an arena of creative and political inquiry that encompasses the individual, family, and the communities with which he engages, as well as the world at large. Sánchez emerged as a central figure in a generation of artists using diverse media to explore ethnic, racial, national identity and social justice in the 1980s and '90s.

While Sánchez first gained recognition for his large multilayered mixed media collage paintings addressing issues of Puerto Rican identity and the struggle against US colonialism, his work has evolved to embrace photography, printmaking, and video. Sánchez has exhibited and lectured throughout the United States, Europe, and Latin America. His art is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, El Museo del Barrio, El Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Wilfredo Lam in Havana, Cuba, as well as in the Smithsonian's Museum of American Art, the National Museum of African American History & Culture, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Mead Museum of Art.

The US Latinx Art Forum (USLAF), in collaboration with the New York Foundation for the Arts, and supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Ford Foundation, awarded Juan Sánchez the Latinx Artist Fellowship. He was the recipient of the 2020 CUAA Augustus Saint-Gaudens Achievement in the Visual Art Award and was inducted into the Cooper Union Hall of Fame. Sánchez received other awards and fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York Foundation for the Arts, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Juan Sánchez: ¿What's The Meaning of This? Painting/ Collage/Video*, BRIC Arts Media House, Brooklyn, NY.
- 2010 *Juan Sánchez: Unknown Boricuas + Prisoner: Abu Ghraib*, Lorenzo Homar Gallery, Taller Puertorriqueña / Philigrafika 2010, Philadelphia, PA.

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2021 *Angela Davis: Seize the Time*, Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum / Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ.
- 2020 *After Spiritualism: Loss and Transcendence in Contemporary Art*, Fitchburg Art Museum, Fitchburg, PA.
- 2019 *Culture and the People: El Museo del Barrio, 1969-2019, Part I: Selections from the Permanent Collection*, Museo del Barrio, New York.
- 2017 *HOME- So Different, So Appealing*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Fine Art, Houston, Houston, TX.
- 2016 *Our America: The Latino Presence in American Art*, Smithsonian Museum of Art, Washington, DC; Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, DE; Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, PA; Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL.
- 2013 *I, You, We: Activism in the 1980s*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.
- 2012 *This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, IL; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA.



Juan Sánchez, *Mujer Vejiganta*, 2014. Mixed media on paper, approx. 42 x 41 in. Courtesy of Guariken Arts Inc.



Juan Sánchez, *Love for Someone Still Searching*, 2012. Mixed media on paper, approx. 42 x 41 in. Courtesy of Guariken Arts Inc.



Juan Sánchez, *Nina Vejiganta Vuelve*, 2014. Mixed media on paper, approx. 42" x 41". Courtesy of Guariken Arts Inc.



Juan Sánchez, *Fallen*, 2012. Mixed media on paper, approx. 42 x 41 in. Courtesy of Guariken Arts Inc.

# ARTHUR SIMMS

The Jamaican-born artist Arthur Simms has been reflecting on his early years in Kingston via his artwork for many years. Born in Cross Roads, St. Andrew in 1961, he emigrated to Brooklyn, New York in 1969. He received both his Masters in Fine Arts in 1993 and Bachelor of Arts in 1987 from Brooklyn College.

For decades, Simms's journey from his native Jamaica to the United States has impacted his voice and his ability to transform lowly materials into works that transcend their humble origins, affording him a unique place in the world of contemporary art.

Simms's numerous awards include the Rome Prize Fellowship, an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Creative Capital Grant, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, residency from the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, residency at the New Roots Foundation in Antigua, Guatemala, residency at Campo Garzon in Garzon, Uruguay, the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Residency Fellowship, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, the S.J. Weiler Fund Award and the Pollock-Krasner Grant. Simms is on the boards of MacDowell and Skowhegan, and is the Director of the Arts Program at CUNY, LaGuardia Community College, where he is a professor of art. Simms resides on Staten Island, New York.

Simms has exhibited nationally and internationally, including representing the country of Jamaica in the 49th Venice Biennial in 2001. Recent solo exhibitions include the Martos Gallery in 2021 and Shoot the Lobster in 2019. Group exhibitions include LA Louver, White Columns, the 58th Venice Biennial, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Musée International des Arts Modestes, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Neuberger Museum, MoMA PS1, the American Academy in Rome, and the Queens Museum. His work will be featured in the upcoming Kingston Biennial at Jamaica's National Gallery.





Arthur Simms, *Wonderful, Wonderful, Arthur Simms in Kingston, Five Halos*, 2015. Artist's hair, markers, wood, paper, silver point, coral, wire, nails, glue, postcard, glassine, graphite, tissue, canvas, paper bag, photograph, 39 x 21 x 5 in. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery, New York.



Arthur Simms, *Blue Light*, 2003. Stones, metal, wire, glass, wood, nails, screws, 10 ½ x 20 x 8 in. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery, New York.



Arthur Simms, *Face Mon*, 2014. Feathers, mule deer head, cobblestone, sticks, bones, wire, wood, 28 x 36 x 36 in. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery, New York.

# PAUL ANTHONY SMITH

Paul Anthony Smith (b. 1988, Jamaica), who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, creates paintings and picotage on pigment prints that explore the artist's autobiography, as well as issues of identity within the African diaspora. Referencing both W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of double consciousness and Frantz Fanon's theory of diasporic cultural confusions caused by colonialism, Smith alludes to fences, borders, and barriers to conceal and alter his subjects and landscapes.

Smith's practice celebrates the rich and complex histories of the post-colonial Caribbean and its people. Memory, migration and home are central to Smith's work, which probes questions of hybrid identities between worlds old and new. Smith's layered picotage is often patterned in the style of Caribbean breeze block fences and modernist architectural elements that function as veils, meant both to obscure and to protect Smith's subjects from external gaze. While photography typically functions as a way in which to reveal and share information, Smith's picotage has a concealing and purposefully perplexing effect. Forcing these nuanced diasporic histories into a singular picture plane, Smith encourages layers of unease within these outwardly jovial portraits. Picotage serves as an access point as Smith interrogates which elements of identity are allowed to pass through the complexities of borders and migration.

Smith's *Dreams Deferred* series, titled after the Langston Hughes poem of the same name, depicts varied urban landscapes, each seemingly contained within single or double chain link fences. The underlayer of these works are photographs taken by Smith of mundane, vacant lots throughout New York City; though when painted over with a heavy impasto of oil stick, these surfaces transform into lush gardens that push against and challenge their barriers. To Smith, these works are a metaphor for the elusive American dream—seductive flowers ready to be picked, yet accessible only to a certain set of people who are granted entry. This flora functions akin to a memento mori, serving as a reminder that once these beautiful, yet fleeting, objects are taken for one's own, they quickly extinguish. The gestural and painterly surfaces of these works suggest that although structures in place attempt to regiment access to these Edenic spaces, the dream has potential to take on a life of its own and rebel against these systems. Smith invokes Hughes's words: "What happens to a dream deferred?/ Does it dry up/ like a raisin in the sun?/ ...Or does it explode?"

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 *Searching*, Kemper Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, and the Blaffer Art Museum, Houston, TX.
- 2021 *Tradewinds*, Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, NY.
- 2019 *Paul Anthony Smith*, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, NE.  
*Junction*, Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, NY.
- 2018 *Paul Anthony Smith: Containment*, Luis De Jesus Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2017 *Walls Without Borders*, Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta, GA.

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2021 *Fragments of Epic Memory*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2019 *Men of Change*, (Touring Exhibition), Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.  
*Get Up, Stand Up: Generations of trailblazing black creativity in Britain and beyond*, THE WEST WING Somerset House, London, UK.
- 2018 *Open Spaces Biennial*, Kansas City, MO.
- 2017 *RAGGA NYC: All the Threatened and Delicious Things Joined One Another*, New Museum, New York, NY.
- 2016 *Disguise: Masks and Global African Art*, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY.
- 2015 *Reality of My Surroundings: The Contemporary Collection*, Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, NC.  
*Concealed: Selections from the Permanent Collection*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY.



Atisha Paulson



Paul Anthony Smith, *So What*, 2016. Unique picotage on inkjet print and colored pencil, mounted on museum board and Sintra, 94.875 x 47.875 x 2 in. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.



Paul Anthony Smith, *Midnight Blue #2*, 2020–21. Unique picotage with oil sticks, acrylic gouache and spray paint mounted on museum board and sintra panel, 96 x 72 x 1.125 in. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

# NARI WARD

Nari Ward (b. 1963, St. Andrew, Jamaica), who lives and works in New York, is known for his sculptural installations composed of discarded material found and collected in his neighborhood. He has repurposed objects such as baby strollers, shopping carts, bottles, doors, television sets, cash registers, and shoelaces, among other materials. Ward re-contextualizes these found objects in thought-provoking juxtapositions that create complex, metaphorical meanings to confront social and political issues surrounding race, poverty, and consumer culture. He intentionally leaves the meaning of his work open, allowing the viewer to provide his or her own interpretation.

Nari Ward received a BA from City University of New York, Hunter College in 1989, and an MFA from City University of New York, Brooklyn College in 1992. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, CO (2020); Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX (2019); New Museum, New York, NY (2019); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA (2017); Socrates Sculpture Park, New York, NY (2017); The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA (2016); Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL (2015); Savannah College of Art and Design Museum of Art, Savannah, GA (2015); Louisiana State University Museum of Art, Baton Rouge, LA (2014); The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA (2011); Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, MA (2011); Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA (2002); and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (2001, 2000).



World Red Eye



Nari Ward, *Black Sweat*, 2019. Shoelaces, shipping barrel, 74 x 44 in. Courtesy of the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London. Photo: Matthew Herrmann.

## KEITH MORRISON

Keith Morrison, *Commander of Distinction*, Jamaica, is an artist, curator, art critic, art educator, and arts administrator. He has exhibited internationally, and his paintings and prints are in the permanent collections of many museums. He has held the rank of professor in several universities and served as academic dean in five universities and art schools. He represented Jamaica in the 1994 Caribbean Biennale and in the 2001 Venice Biennale. He was guest editor for *The New Art Examiner*. He was the US art critic and cultural envoy to the 2008

Shanghai Biennale. The book *African Diaspora in the Cultures of Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States*, edited by Persephone Braham, 2016, was inspired by his paintings. He is the author of *Art in Washington and Its Afro-American Presence: 1940–1970*; *Pin-pricked Deities: The Art of Joyce Scott*, Baltimore Museum of Art, 2000. He co-authored with David C. Driskell and Juanita M. Holland: *Narratives of African American Art and Identity*, 1999. Pomegranate Press published the book, *Keith Morrison*, by Renee Ater, in 2004.

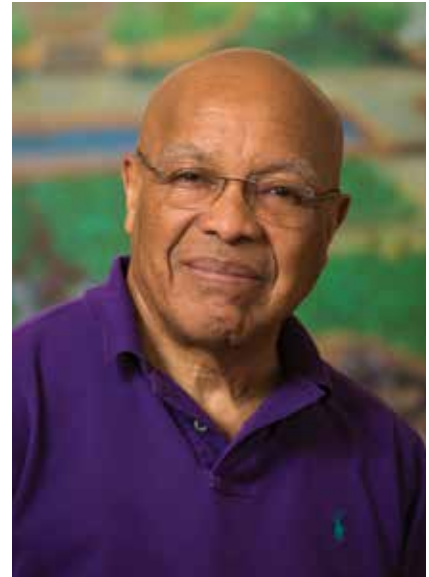


Photo: © Sam Fritch Photography

## EXHIBITIONS CURATED BY KEITH MORRISON

*Magical Visions*, University of Delaware Museums, 2012  
*The Curator's Eye*, National Gallery of Art, Kingston, Jamaica, 2008  
*Metaphor/Commentaries: Artists from Cuba*: Ludwig Foundation Havana, Cuba, 1999  
San Francisco State University Art Gallery, 1999  
*Contemporary Print Images*, Smithsonian Institution International Traveling Exhibition:  
National Museum, Bamako, Mali, 1986  
American Cultural Center, Niamey, Niger, 1986  
School of Fine Arts Gallery, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, 1986  
Municipal Gallery, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1986  
*Myth and Ritual*, Touchstone Gallery, Washington DC, 1986  
*Evocative Abstraction*, Nexus Gallery, Philadelphia, 1986  
*Art in Washington and Its Afro-American Presence: 1940–1970*, Washington Project for the Arts, 1985  
*Alternatives by Blacks*, Washington Project for the Arts, 1981  
*Black Experience in Art*, Bergman Gallery, University of Chicago, 1971  
*Jacob Lawrence's Toussaint L'Overture Series*, DePaul University, 1969

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Front cover: Nari Ward, *Black Sweat*, 2019. shoelaces, shipping barrel,  
74 x 44 in. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York,  
Hong Kong, Seoul, and London. Photo: Matthew Herrmann.

Inside front cover: María Magdalena Campos-Pons, *She Always Knew of  
the Space In-Between*, [detail], 2019. Gouache, watercolor, watercolor  
pencil, acrylic ink and a peacock feather on paper, 63 x 32 in.  
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco.

Back cover: Laura Facey, *Guide Their Way Home*, 2021.  
Guango, cedar, mahogany, and video accompaniment,  
29 x 27 x 16 in. Courtesy of the artist.



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