

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

El Museo del Barrio's Permanent Collection on View in New York and Nevada

Bicoastal Permanent Collection Openings at El Museo and the Nevada Museum of Art

Presencia – Opening March 6, 2013 at El Museo del Barrio

Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Collection of El Museo del Barrio, New York –
Opening March 2, 2013 at Nevada Museum of Art



Fernando Salicrup (New York, 1946)
Una vez más, Colón (Once more, Columbus), 1978
Acrylic on linen, 54 x 44 in.
El Museo del Barrio, New York



Miguel Luciano (Puerto Rico 1972; New York)
Pelea de gallos, 2002
Acrylic on canvas wrapped over wood box
60 x 48 x 2 7/8 in.
El Museo del Barrio, New York

NEW YORK, February 27, 2013—*Presencia* and *Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Collection of El Museo del Barrio* mark the launch of a long-term collaboration between El Museo del Barrio and the Nevada Museum of Art. These exhibitions contain a selection of works from El Museo's permanent collection, which contains 6,500 Caribbean, Latino, and Latin American art objects. Drawing from a vast array of regions such as Puerto Rico, Mexico,

Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and the United States, El Museo's permanent collection represents a range of artistic practices from Taíno and Pre-Columbian traditions to contemporary art.

Founded in 1971, the collection includes Modern and Contemporary works, 20th and 21st century social and political graphics, Pre-Columbian and Pan-Caribbean archeological objects, and pieces influenced by popular traditions like Santos de Palo and Dia de Los Muertos (*Day of the Death*) as well as devotional arts inspired by Santeria, Candomblé, and the Yoruba tradition.

This partnership between El Museo del Barrio and the Nevada Museum of Art aims to expand national awareness, access, and visibility for El Museo's significant permanent collection of contemporary and historical art into the West Coast, and to provide new recognition opportunities for mid-career El Museo-affiliated artists.

Gonzalo Casals, Deputy Executive Director of El Museo del Barrio, notes: "As the Latino community continues to grow and expand across our country, American culture is redefined. We are very excited that the Nevada Museum of Art understands this, and decided to mirror our changing America with a complementary programmatic vision. This collaboration is a trailblazer for other museums willing to embrace new audiences, connect with a broader set of stakeholders and be a platform for talented Latino artists."

The initiative also aims to advance cultural understanding and engagement through sustainable, community-focused partnerships with rapidly-growing Latino and Hispanic populations in northern Nevada.

"As the only art museum in Nevada, we recognize the importance of engaging all our citizens in the dynamic programming of ideas at the Nevada Museum of Art," said David B. Walker, Executive Director | CEO, Nevada Museum of Art. "Although we have a history of presenting exhibitions and education programs featuring Hispanic and Latino artists, this has admittedly been sporadic. *Voces y Visiones*, presented in collaboration with New York City's El Museo del Barrio, is aimed at developing a sustainable conversation with our growing Hispanic and Latino populations. We believe this is critically important."

El Museo del Barrio ***Presencia***

Presencia, the most recent exhibition of work from El Museo's permanent collection, focuses on ideas of presence and its antithesis, absence. This theme is explored through photography, painting, prints, drawings, masks, and other objects. The exhibition investigates the visibility and invisibility of

the human form through the presentation of the body in literal and conceptual ways. The featured artists play with their figures, showing bodies revealed and obscured, evidently displayed or camouflaged.

Some of the featured artists include Luis Mendez, whose figurine sculptures and masks evoke both the ancient and modern stylistically harkening back to the artistic tradition of ancient cultures, yet rendered with the modernist attention to form and space; Shaun El C. Leonardo, a multi-discipline artist who embodies the traditional masculine and heroic figure of the Lucha Libre wrestler to explore the myths they perpetuate; and Oscar Muñoz, whose innovative use of carbon powder renders his self-portraits unstable, oscillating between existence and nothingness. Others on view include Benvenuto Chavajay, Christian Cravo, Roberto Juárez, Fernando Salicrup, and Rafael Tufiño. *Presencia* will complement the upcoming photography exhibition, *superreal*, opening on March 5th, 2013.

Nevada Museum of Art

Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Collection of El Museo del Barrio

Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Collection of El Museo del Barrio, New York features over fifty objects including sculpture, painting, prints, photographs, and mixed media installations addressing themes such as identity politics, colonialism, emotional connections to homeland, and contemporary visual culture. On view March 2 through July 7, 2013, lively contemporary artworks created by living artists are contextualized with a concise selection of ancient Taíno stone carvings.

JoAnne Northrup, Director of Contemporary Art Initiatives, Nevada Museum of Art, and co-curator of the *Voces y Visiones* exhibition says, "Staff from both institutions worked in concert to include works that describe the richness of Latino culture, created by living artists. The work is engaging, colorful, provocative, and touches upon artists' enduring connection to their national, cultural and ethnic heritages. In bringing their stories to Reno, we hope to engage Museum visitors in thinking about their own familial roots, and how their backgrounds have made them the individuals they are today."

During the exhibition, the Museum offers guests a variety of opportunities to learn more about the work on display through a series of talks with El Museo Curator Rocío Aranda-Alvarado and artists Cecile Chong and Margarita Cabrera.

About El Museo del Barrio

El Museo del Barrio, New York's leading Latino cultural institution, welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures. Their richness is represented in El Museo's wide-ranging collections and critically acclaimed exhibitions, complemented by film, literary, visual and performing arts series, cultural celebrations, and educational programs.

El Museo del Barrio was founded over 40 years ago by artist and educator Raphael Montañez Ortiz and by a coalition of Puerto Rican parents, educators, artists and activists who noted that mainstream museums largely ignored Latino artists. Since its inception, El Museo has been committed to celebrating and promoting Latino culture, thus becoming a cornerstone of El Barrio, and a valuable resource for New York City. El Museo's varied permanent collection of over 6,500 objects spanning more than 800 years of Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino art includes pre-Columbian Taíno artifacts, traditional arts, twentieth-century drawings, paintings, sculptures and installations, as well as prints, photography, documentary films and video. For more information on El Museo del Barrio, please visit www.elmuseo.org.

About The Nevada Museum of Art

The Nevada Museum of Art is a museum of ideas. The oldest cultural institution in the state of Nevada, the Museum was founded in 1931 and is currently the only AAM accredited art museum in the state. It is a private, non-profit organization that provides the opportunity for people to encounter, engage and enjoy a diversity of art experiences. The Museum's permanent collection is divided into four thematic focus areas: *Contemporary Art*, *Altered Landscape Photography*, *Art of the Greater West*, and the *Work Ethic Collection*. These thematic, rather than historical or stylistic, specializations are a natural outgrowth of the institution's collecting practices over the years. In January 2009, the Museum launched the Center for Art + Environment (CA+E), an internationally recognized research center located at the Nevada Museum of Art, that supports the practice, study and awareness of creative interactions between people and their natural, built, and virtual environments. Visit the Nevada Museum of Art online at nevadaart.org.

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