

EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

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EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO PRESENTS

Something Beautiful: Reframing La Colección

***The Museum's most ambitious presentation of the Permanent Collection
in over two decades***

May 19, 2023 - March 10, 2024

Press Preview | March 18, 2023 | 10am - 12pm
RSVP at press@elmuseo.org

NEW YORK, NY, April 24, 2023 – El Museo del Barrio is proud to announce *Something Beautiful: Reframing La Colección*, the Museum's most ambitious presentation of its unique, complex, and culturally diverse permanent collection in over two decades. Organized by Rodrigo Moura, Chief Curator; Susanna V. Temkin, Curator; and Lee Sessions, Permanent Collection Associate Curator, the exhibition will present approximately 500 artworks, including new acquisitions and artist commissions, through rotating displays over the course of one year. *Something Beautiful* cuts across traditional chronological, geographic, and media-specific categories, reconsidering the Collection through new interdisciplinary approaches rooted in El Museo del Barrio's foundational history and legacy. This forward-thinking model focuses on the contribution of Amerindian, African, and European cultures as the basis of visual production in the Americas and the Caribbean.

“Assembled over the course of more than 50 years, El Museo's collection defies conventional museological narratives and represents a significant manifestation of our diasporic and community origins.” Said Patrick Charpenel, Executive Director, El Museo del Barrio.

The exhibition is the result of a multi-year research initiative titled *Identity Reimagined: Reframing La Colección*. In an effort to promote and advance new knowledge, the Museum engaged in communal dialogues with more than 40 artists, scholars, community leaders, and museum professionals to explore the rich possibilities of the Collection. As part of renewed efforts to acknowledge Taíno culture as a living resource, a Taíno counsel led by scholar Christina Gonzalez and members of the Taíno community was assembled to invite the participation of *cemí* and other spiritually relevant object-beings currently in El Museo's care. Together, these conversations helped shape a revised framework for the Collection, foregrounding concepts such as African and Indigenous heritages, urban experiences, representational strategies, and craft intersections, reflecting an innovative approach to Puerto Rican, Latinx, Caribbean, and Latin American cultural production and identities.

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Curators Moura, Temkin, and Sessions assert, “unlike the majority of mainstream art museum collections, which continue to center Eurocentric values and art historical canons despite efforts to diversify, our collection is grounded in a decolonial project.”

The title, *Something Beautiful*, draws from a print in the collection by artist Marcos Dimas with a poem of the same name by Tania Niomi Ramirez. The work both celebrates and invokes the challenges of political, cultural, and historical inheritances, and as such, metaphorically reflects larger ideas proposed by this new reframing.

ARTIST COMMISSIONS

Artists Maria Gaspar (b. 1980 Chicago) and Glendalys Medina (b. 1979 Ponce, Puerto Rico) were commissioned to create new artworks reflecting and responding to *Something Beautiful*. Composed of a sculpture and new site-specific intervention, Medina’s *Cohoba* invites viewers into the *cohoba* ceremony, the spiritual center of Taíno life. As a diasporic Nuyorican artist based in East Harlem, Medina has repeatedly returned to how knowledge is transmitted and remixed and how social structures can empower individuals. Presented in Room 110, Gaspar’s presentation, *Force of Things*, includes a new body of work that marks the demolition of the largest single-site jail in the country, the Cook County Department of Corrections. This exhibition responds to the violent conditions of carcerality through sculptures, paintings, and videos that examine what is often unseen and invisible.

FIRST ROTATION SECTIONS

The first rotation of *Something Beautiful: Reframing La Colección* is organized in eight sections plus seven artist spotlights. Themes and motifs reappear across sections to create a larger conversation throughout the exhibition. Sections include: **Ocama Aracoel:** Taíno spirits and forms and their influence on the Nuyorican art movement; **Cosmic Visions:** Indigenous and non-indigenous artists evoking Amerindian languages, landscapes, and other cultural references; **First Impressions:** Focusing on early acquisitions and the graphic portfolio in Puerto Rican printmaking; **El Barrio:** Different facets of life in East Harlem and other Barrios in New York, especially around the stoop, the sidewalk, and the bodega; **The Street Transforms:** Artists’ and activists’ interventions in public space; **Pathos, Hope, Glory:** Transhistorical portraits and self portraits of artists reflecting the diversity of the Latinx experience; **Clothed/Unclothed:** Artworks that explore, exaggerate, and deconstruct what it means to be male, female, neither, or both; and **Abstraccionistas:** The protagonism of women in abstract art, matrilinear traditions, opticalities and the framing of reality through abstraction. Artist spotlights will feature the works of **Jorge Soto Sánchez** (1947 New York, NY – 1987 White River Junction, VT); **Alejandro Diaz** (b. 1963, San Antonio, TX; lives in New York, NY); **Papo Colo** (b. 1947, Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico; lives between New York, NY and El Yunque, Puerto Rico); **Antonio Lopez** (1943, Utuado, Puerto Rico – 1987, Thousand Oaks, CA); and **Myrna Baez** (1931, Santurce, Puerto Rico – 2018, Hato Ray, Puerto Rico).

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PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

ADÁL (1947, Utuado, Puerto Rico – 2020, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Laura Aguilar** (1959, San Gabriel, CA – 2018, Long Beach, CA); **John Albok** (1894, Munkacs, Hungary – 1982, New York, NY); **José R. Alicea** (1928, Ponce, Puerto Rico; lives in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico); **Rubén Rivera Aponte** (1931, Bayamón, Puerto Rico); **Asco** (Active [activo] Los Angeles, California, 1970 - 1987); **Félix Rodríguez Báez** (1929, Cayey, Puerto Rico – 2013, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Myrna Báez** (1931, Santurce, Puerto Rico – 2018, Hato Ray, Puerto Rico); **Charles Biasiny-Rivera** (1930, Bronx, NY; lives in Olivebridge, NY); **Eloy Blanco** (1933, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico – 1984, New York, NY); **Nao Bustamante** (1969, San Joaquin Valley, CA; lives in New York, NY); **Roger Cabán** (1942, Isabela, Puerto Rico – 2017, New York, NY); **José Caraballo** (1930, Santruce, Puerto Rico – 1992, Collegedale, TN); **Héctor Méndez Caratini** (1949, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in San Juan); **Luis Carle** (1962, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in New York, NY); **José A. Rosa Castellanos** (1939, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in San Juan); **Carolina Caycedo** (1978, London, United Kingdom; lives in Los Angeles, CA); **Martín Chambi** (1891, Coaza, Peru – 1973, Cuzco, Peru); **Marta Chilindron** (1951, Buenos Aires, Argentina; lives in New York, NY); **Papo Colo** (1947, Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico; lives between New York, NY and El Yunque, Puerto Rico); **Gisela Colón** (1966, Vancouver, Canada; lives in Los Angeles, CA); **Máximo Colón** (1950, Arecibo, Puerto Rico; lives in New York, NY); **David Antonio Cruz** (1974, Philadelphia, PA; lives in New York, NY); **Francisco Domingos da Silva (Chico da Silva)** (1910, Cruzeiro do Sul, Brazil – 1985, Fortaleza, Brazil); **Felipe Dante** (1934, New York, NY – 2004, Brooklyn, NY); **Jaime Davidovich** (1936, Buenos Aires, Argentina – 2016, New York, NY); **Perla de León** (1952, New York, NY; lives in New York); **Silvia de Leon Chalreo** (1905, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil – 1991, Niterói, Brazil); **Marius de Zayas** (1880, Veracruz, Mexico – 1961, Stamford, CT); **Pablo Delano** (1954, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in Hartford, CT); **Alejandro Diaz** (1963, San Antonio, TX; lives in New York, NY); **Marcos Dimas** (1943, Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico; lives in Bronx, NY); **Ejlat Feuer** (1949, Israel; lives in New York, NY); **Sara Flores** (1950, Loreto region of the Peruvian Amazon; lives in Yarinacocha, Peru); **Antonio Frasconi** (1919, Montevideo, Uruguay – 2013 Norwalk, CT); **Leo Goldstein** (1901, Kishinev, Russia – 1972, New York, NY); **Alfred González** (1962, New York, NY; lives in New York); **Beatriz González** (1938, Bucaramanga, Colombia; lives in Bogotá, Colombia); **Jorge González** (1981, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in San Juan); **Sheronawe Hakihiiwe** (1971, Alto Orinoco, Amazonas, Venezuela; lives in Mahekototeri and Caracas, Venezuela); **Carmen Herrera** (1915, Havana, Cuba – 2022, New York, NY); **Lucia Hierro** (1987, New York, NY; lives in New York, NY); **Lorenzo Homar** (1913–2004, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Virginia Jaramillo** (1939, El Paso, TX; lives in New York, NY); **Shaun "El C." Leonardo** (1979, Queens, NY; lives in New York, NY); **Helen Levitt** (1913, Brooklyn, NY – 2009, New York, NY); **Antonio Lopez** (1943, Utuado, Puerto Rico – 1987, Thousand Oaks, CA); **Evelyn López de Guzmán** (1947, New York, NY; lives in Martinsburg, WV); **Rafael López del Campo** (1936, Barranquitas, Puerto Rico – 2009, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Jorge Macchi** (1963, Buenos Aires, Argentina; lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina); **Antonio Maldonado** (1920, Manatí, Puerto Rico – 2006, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Carlos Marichal** (1923, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain – 1969, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Augusto Marín** (1921, Puerto Rico – 2011, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Hiram Maristany** (1945, New York, NY – 2022, St. Petersburg, FL); **Antonio Martorell** (1939, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in Playa de Ponce, Puerto Rico); **Glendalys Medina** (1979, Ponce, Puerto Rico; lives in New York, NY); **Ana Mendieta** (1948, Havana, Cuba – 1985, New York,

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NY); **Carlos Mérida** (1891, Guatemala City, Guatemala – 1984, Mexico City, Mexico); **Raphael Montañez Ortiz** (1934, Brooklyn, NY; lives in Highland Park, NJ); **Rafael Colón Morales** (1941, Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico – 2021, Arecibo, Puerto Rico); **Ruben Natal-San Miguel** (1970, Arecibo, Puerto Rico; lives in New York, NY); **Julio Nazario** (New York, NY; lives in Highland Park, NJ); **Juanishi Orosco** (1945, Sacramento, CA; lives in Sacramento); **Carlos Osorio** (1927 – 1984, Caguas, Puerto Rico); **César Paternosto** (1931, La Plata, Argentina; lives in Segovia, Spain); **Dalton Paula** (1982, Brasília, Brazil; lives in Goiânia, Brazil); **Geandy L. Pavón** (1974, Las Tunas, Cuba; lives in New Jersey); **Jaime Permuth** (1968, Guatemala City, Guatemala; lives in Seoul, South Korea); **Nick Quijano** (1953, New York, NY; lives in San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Wanda Maria Quiñones** (Dates unknown); **Larry Racioppo** (1947, Brooklyn, NY; lives in New York, NY); **Jorge Rechany** (1914–1990, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Carlos Raquel Rivera** (1923, Yauco, Puerto Rico – 1999, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Jaime Romano** (1942, San Juan, Puerto Rico; lives in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico); **Lotty Rosenfeld** (1943, Santiago, Chile 1943 – 2020, Santiago, Chile); **Emilio Sánchez** (1921, Camagüey, Cuba – 1999, New York, NY); **Juan Sánchez** (1954, Brooklyn, NY; lives in Brooklyn); **Samuel Sánchez Herrera** (1929, Corozal, Puerto Rico – 2014, Chicago, IL); **Fanny Sanín** (1938, Bogotá, Colombia; lives in New York, NY); **Carmelo Sobrino** (1948, Manatí, Puerto Rico; lives in Bayamón, Puerto Rico); **Jorge Soto Sánchez** (1947, New York, NY – 1987, White River Junction, VT); **Joey Terrill** (1955, Los Angeles, CA; lives in Los Angeles, CA); **José Antonio Torres Martinó** (1916 – 2011, Ponce, Puerto Rico); **Nitza Tufiño** (1949, Mexico City, Mexico; lives in South Orange, NJ); **Rafael Tufiño** (1922, Brooklyn, NY – 2008, San Juan, Puerto Rico); **Rafael Tufiño II** (1951, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico; lives in New York, NY); **Vincent Valdez** (1977, San Antonio, TX; lives in Houston, TX); **Manuel Vega** (1956, New York, NY; lives in New York); **Tony Vélez** (1946, Bronx, NY–Norwalk, CT); **Camilo José Vergara** (1944, Santiago, Chile; lives in New York, NY); **Edgar Ruiz Zapata** (1951, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico); **Carlos Zerpa** (1950, Valencia, Venezuela; lives in Caracas, Venezuela).

NEW PUBLICATION

On the occasion of *Something Beautiful*, an accompanying publication drawing from the contributions of 45 invited speakers introduces new expertise about the Collection and its future. Published as a dialogic mosaic, the publication includes excerpted reflections about El Museo's role in institutional ecosystems. Select contributors include: Beverly Adams, Cecilia Fajardo-Hill, Marcela Guerrero, Gala Kim, Yasmin Ramírez, Taína Traverso, Adriana Zavala, and Julian Zugazagoitia, among others.

SPONSORS

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ABOUT EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

El Museo del Barrio is the nation's leading Latinx and Latin American cultural institution. The Museum welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of these communities through its extensive Permanent Collection, varied exhibitions and publications, bilingual public programs, educational activities, festivals, and special events.

The Museum is located at 1230 Fifth Avenue at 104th Street in New York City. The Museum is open Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00am – 5:00pm. Pay-what-you-wish. To connect with El Museo via Social Media, follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. For more information, please visit www.elmuseo.org.

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