

**PRESS RELEASE**

Opening Reception | Saturday, June 25 from 6 to 9 pm

On View | June 25 — August 20, 2022

Pan American Art Projects is excited to announce *ABCDEFGH*, a group show featuring the works of mainly Miami based artists Paul Amundarain, Rigoberto Diaz, Filio Galvez, Delvin Lugo, Marlon Portales, Jorge Rios, and Leticia Sanchez Toledo. *ABCDEFGH* will be on view from June 25 to August 20, 2022, with an opening reception for the artists on Saturday June 25, from 6 to 9 pm.

*ABCDEFGH* brings together seven practices through which artists articulate their own forms of commons through painting. In this exhibition, different artistic manifestations coexist, such as painting in its most academic representation, an expanded and contemporary version, as well as non-traditional interpretations involving drawing, and installation.

This show is a frivolous ode to the complexity of culture of our days, its meta definitions, hypersensitivity, automation: it is a call to attention to the details of life, to what we are. It is why we quote Rosalía's song "ABCDEFGH", where the singer returns to the primitive and simple way of associating the letters of the alphabet with words, expressions and events that are in popular slang. She omits letters, she makes up words or "miswrites" them. It is a break from over-thinking the conceptual searching in life, which looks more beautiful the simpler it is.

*ABCDEFGH* will be accompanied by a scheduled programming of movie screenings curated by Filio Galvez.

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"ABCDEFGH" - Rosalía

A de alta, altura, alien

B de bandida

C de coqueta

D de dinamita

E de expansiva, emperatriz, enigma, enterada

F de Flux Aeon

G de guapa

H de hondura

I de inteligencia artificial

J de jineta

M de motomami, motomami, motomami

Motomami, motomami

N de "Ni se te ocurra ni pensarlo"

O de orquídea

P de patrona

Q de qué reinona

R de racineta, racineta, rango

Racineta, rango

S de sata

T de titánica

U de ultrasonidos

V de vendetta

W de Willy Colon

De Winterfall también

X de "Te despejo la X en un momento"

Y de yenes, de yantas

Y Z de zarzamora, o de zapateo', o de zorra también

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### PAUL AMUNDARAIN

Born in Caracas in 1985, Paul Amundarain began studying Architecture, but soon became interested in producing art, and instead pursued different design and sculpture workshops where he could develop his creative impulse. He has exhibited largely in Maracaibo and Caracas in collective shows and local art fairs, and has had four solo exhibitions in Venezuela, at Vioria Blanco Gallery in Maracaibo, and Parenthesis Gallery in Caracas. Paul Amundarain lives and works between Caracas and Miami.

Paul Amundarain belongs to a generation that received the legacy of the grid already deconstructed. The grid allowed modernity to be structured and art to be reorganized. His research tries to solve social problems using technological processes as a record of his own experiences.

His largest series of assemblages titled *Urban Skins* and *Anarchical Skins* are a visual synthesis of what Caracas looks like from above, intending to analyze and reflect upon the social circumstances and irrationality that prevail in this chaotic urban development. Amundarain departs from the overhead shots taken from the city's barrios (slums) as a model, and dissects its landscape formed by the geometric shapes of the roofs of millions of ranchos (favelas). He uses Aluminum triangle and square blade-like shapes that overlap the bi-dimensional surface and produces volumetric assemblages that suggest not only the violence, but also the unruly and massive informal habitable solutions of poverty.

In other bodies of work, Amundarain is reflecting upon Venezuela's conflictive street violence to generate paintings, sculptures and installations, thinking about the unfortunate popular culture icons of violence in the context of their own reality, in which the whole city becomes a crime scene at large. It is quite common in today's Caracas to find its urban landscape scarred with physical evidence of this violence, such as the traces left from bullets in street signs, protection barriers on roads, and damaged infrastructure that present vestiges of thuggery. In his series *Impact*, Amundarain perforates aluminum surfaces painted in gold with real bullets, or as in *Formal Subtraction* where he removes highway safety barriers that have been damaged by car crashes or bullets, and alters them into sculptures, not before intervening them with paint or chroming their surfaces.

With his work, Amundarain is commenting about the social scenario of a system that has progressively fallen on hard times, using a visual strategy that pertains to Venezuela's rooted art historiography within the disciplinary boundaries of geometric abstraction.

### RIGOBERTO DIAZ

Rigoberto Diaz' artistic proposal is a means of research and experimentation, an analytical instrument that dialogues about the entities where it develops and new forms of relationships are created. Each space is a world of dissimilar analogies which he is interested in investigating to create a work that links with the passer-by and the environment, obtaining a flow of data between the work and the public. Diaz' conceptual and formal codes are within and outside the limits of the installation, public interventions, Site Specific, photography and works with a procedural nature. Using a group of practices allows him to organize field work in the established area. The study of physical and symbolic space is a constant in his work, where he develops works that investigate memory, power, waste as traces of behaviors that inhabit a space.

In his latest series, *Location Intelligence*, he makes drawings with Roomba vacuum cleaners based on their geolocation. Intervention in private spaces where they are used as limits to create localization patterns and pre-design of the area. Artificial intelligence creates patterns of behaviors to delimit obstacles. These vacuum cleaners use Location Intelligence: it is the process of obtaining a meaningful view of geospatial data relationships to solve a particular problem - the ability to understand or learn, or the ability to apply knowledge to manage the Environment

Diaz develops works that explore space as a symbolic platform to generate reflections and questions about memory. At the same time he's interested in space as a system in which life-forms, behaviors, and information is constantly being produced. As he approaches these dynamics, Diaz tries to find new interstices that make visible and understand these areas of confluence of relationships. The scope of action is extensive: libraries, warehouses, housing prototypes, schools, publishing houses, shelters, prisons, political institutions, etc. That is why his actions are not reduced to the gallery space, but interact with less conventional scenarios than the art circuit.

### FILIO GALVEZ

Filio Galvez was born in Havana, Cuba, where he studied at the renowned National Academy of Fine Art San Alejandro. Upon moving to Miami, he enrolled in the Visual Arts Degree program at New School of the Arts (NWSA).

Using digital data for aesthetic purposes by either corrupting or physically manipulating electronic devices is a common denominator in Galvez's practice. The attention to this operative principle, rather than the politics of form, is the basis of the present research. The results are not those from a lab, they are expressly subjective, necessarily subjective to lend subjectivity to a platform of communication, and they play with the nightmare of the self-conscious data.

In his series *R.I.P (Reverse Image Painting)*, Galvez attempts to automate the process of artistic creation. The reference images that are reproduced are found through various search engines, always starting from an abstraction; this process is repeated until the compositions are completed.

## DELVIN LUGO

In Delvin Lugo's current series of paintings *Early Life in Neon*, the artist revisits memories from his hometown in Moncion, Dominican Republic. In these vibrant works, Lugo highlights positive, nurturing, and comic aspects of the rural life his family lived prior to their emigration to the United States when he was twelve years old.

Resourcefulness and improvisation were intertwined with his earliest expressions of identity as a gay boy interested in fashion and the fabulous: wearing one of his mother's earrings or having a homemade Barbie doll are celebrated in these paintings. Highlighting the retrospectively humorous elements of these early expressions is also essential in this series. Years before Lugo (or his family members) learned to speak English his favorite t-shirt bore the slogan "Bitch, Bitch, Bitch!" and he proudly showcases it here. This bold approach to life is manifested and amplified through the use of vibrant and fluorescent colors in the paintings. To accentuate the spirit of playfulness, these paintings can also be viewed in black light. In any light, though, they are full of delight, resilience, and a tenacious joy.

Delvin attended the Maine College of Art for and received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts. He currently resides in New York City.

## MARLON PORTALES

The emerging Cuban artist Marlon Portales (Pinar del Rio, 1991) graduated in 2018 from Havana's Higher Institute of Art (ISA) with honors. Portales' practice is multidisciplinary and includes media ranging from painting to installation, video art, photography and performance. His views in the fields of politics and ideals yield works that carry evident sociological and philosophical quests. Ultimately, through his work, he aims at engaging the observer in a dialogue about different points of views as well as universally shared reflections.

His series *Retiro Coyuntural* emerged within the most intimate space-time (less exposed and known) of the artist's life from the end of 2019 until the present day. This series narrates from an essentially visual perspective, events, interactions, interventions and relationships with the spaces of his immediate context. The works, apparently unrelated, have a strong thread that binds them together as a total idea, becoming remnants of his everyday life.

Portales has ventured into a journey of escape and oxygenation, practically of flight, from those cultural imperatives that his life in Cuba had imposed on his work. The works are almost a poetic documentation of this stage where the political, religious, and social margins are lost and linked. He experiences this journey with the notion of Homo pictur, as an avid producer and consumer of images who extracts a visual residue from each experience.

### JORGE RIOS

Jorge Rios holds a BA in painting from the National Academy of Arts “San Alejandro” in Havana, Cuba. In 2021 earned his BFA at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago; he is currently enrolled in the MFA program at Washington University in St. Louis.

The work of Jorge Rios transcends the flatness of ordinary visual language reaching the subtlety, ambivalence and complexity that we perceive more clearly in other art forms such as music or poetry. Rios tries to establish through his art a link between the individual experience of reality and the totality of existence - whether you call it God, the Truth, the Idea, the Spirit, the Da-sein, the Being, or the Nothingness... In other words, “art for me has the mission of redeeming the being out of the mundanity of the human condition, by stimulating what is divine, universal and eternal in it.”

### LETICIA SANCHEZ TOLEDO

Miami-based contemporary visual artist Leticia Sánchez Toledo was born in 1985 and is of Cuban and Spanish descent. She is well-known for her personal depictions of women and scenes of women that are influenced by her passion for movies, where color and light play key roles in evoking a certain aura or atmosphere.

She spent her childhood learning about the world through the big screen at the nearby movie theater in the little town where she lived. Today Leticia offers a personal view of her wishes and concerns while also examining social, cultural, and ethnic issues that are present in the lives of women today. She does this as a mental challenge and by using film-like frames to communicate her point of view in the social space.