



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**THE MUSEUM OF LATIN AMERICAN ART (MOLAA) IS PLEASED TO PRESENT
RELATIONAL UNDERCURRENTS: CONTEMPORARY ART OF THE CARIBBEAN ARCHIPELAGO
A PACIFIC STANDARD TIME: LA /LA EXHIBITION**

SEPTEMBER 16, 2017 – FEBRUARY 25, 2018

(Media Preview: Friday, September 15, 10:00am–1:00pm)

Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago, curated by Tatiana Flores, features twenty-first century art of the Caribbean, as seen through the framework of the archipelago. While it is common for scholars to stress the region's variegated colonial history and extraordinary diversity, *Relational Undercurrents* focuses instead on identifying thematic continuities in the art of the Caribbean islands. As some of these themes are not typically thought of as belonging to "Latin America," the exhibition questions the conceptual boundaries imposed on areas that are geographically contiguous and share both similar ecologies and histories.

Departing from the premise that the concept of Latin America favors mainland countries, the exhibition proposes a mapping of the region that begins with the islands. It features over 80 artists with roots in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten, St. Martin, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Trinidad, Jamaica, The Bahamas, Barbados, and St. Vincent. As their work reveals, an insular focus brings to the fore those issues that cannot be overlooked when dealing with the Caribbean and which are also relevant to the region as a whole. Arising from the region's prolonged legacy of colonialism, recurring themes include race and ethnicity, history, identity, sovereignty, migration, and sustainability. These and others are explored in the exhibition's four thematic sections: Conceptual Mappings, Perpetual Horizons, Landscape Ecologies and Representational Acts. With works by over eighty artists *Relational Undercurrents* includes painting, installation art, sculpture, photography, video, and performance. The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive, full color catalog.

Major support for this exhibition and publication is provided through grants from the Getty Foundation.

Conceptual Mappings

Conceptual Mappings focuses on works that represent an active effort to map intentional connectivity. Through an array of visual means, the artists in this section challenge the spatial order imposed by the traditional map, the emblem of colonialism par excellence. In the words of the scholar Walter Mignolo, "Putting the Americas on the map from a European perspective was not necessarily a task devoted to finding the true shape of the earth; it was also related to controlling territories and colonizing the imagination of people on both sides of the Atlantic." In contrast to imperial maps, many of the works on view here could be said to embark on a project of decolonization. Archipelagic in nature, they involve a process of counter mapping, reframing a different paradigm, plotting new points of connection, and imagining and creating new coordinates. In so doing, they propose more diverse, just, and complex forms of conceiving the world.

Perpetual Horizons

Perpetual Horizons underscores the horizon, one of the characteristic visual features of island geography, which emerges repeatedly as both a boundary and a threshold of possibilities. The horizontal perspective reflects both a view of the horizon that focuses our attention on the borders that divide the land as well as on the movements of circulating sea and air currents. The horizon as limit and potential, as past and present, and as clarity and uncertainty marks some of the ways in which the artists in this section engage with the edge where the sea meets the sky. Whether they treat the horizon as a subject or incidentally, these artists contribute to a common discourse, eloquently identified by poet Derek Walcott: "There is a strength that is drawn from island peoples in that reality of scale in which they inhabit. There is a sense both of infinity and acceptance of the possibility of infinity, which is strong. And in that way that provides a kind of endurance. It provides a kind of settling of the mind that is equal to the level of the horizon. That is what I have learned from growing up on an island."

Landscape Ecologies

Landscape Ecologies considers the Caribbean as a region of shared ecosystems and habitats. Attesting to the significance of the environment in contemporary art, the artists whose works comprise this section depict the landscape in light of history, ecological challenges, the personal and the collective, and current economic and social conditions. Perceptions of the Caribbean landscape have changed over time, ranging from the wonderment experienced by Christopher Columbus and his contemporaries as they struggled to find the words to describe newly encountered territories; to the association between landscape, disease, and degeneration in imperialism's heyday; to more recent attempts by the tourism industry to paint the region as an undiscovered paradise. The scholar Édouard Glissant posited that "the control of nature, and of one's nature, by culture was the ideal of the Western mind." The artists in Landscape Ecologies betray a similar awareness. Conscious of the stakes in their depictions of nature and the environment, they refuse to let themselves fall prey to colonialist mentalities and formulas, instead, paving new directions and letting their voices be heard in the struggle to represent the silent, embattled earth.

Representational Acts

Representational Acts views representation as an active process rather than a passive translation of the visible world. As opposed to the imitative function associated with representation in traditional art history, the artists whose works comprise this section regard representation in a political sense. All of the Caribbean islands, even those that obtained independence early in the nineteenth century, have seen their sovereignty challenged

through colonialism or foreign occupations. In some cases (most visibly Puerto Rico in the Hispanic Americas), they continue to exist as non-sovereign states. Political agency has been an elusive notion and in many cases an unattainable ideal. For this reason, representation takes on added urgency in an insular Caribbean context. Artworks in this section actively reconfigure the world they inhabit, whether through social practice or by encouraging self-expression. Artists also project an active and dynamic relationship with their surroundings or with others around them. Through representational acts, artists also comment on their work in relation to race, gender, and sexuality, and showcase the analogous ways in which they are enmeshed with the environments they inhabit.

EXHIBITION OPENING RECEPTION

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2017

7:00 – 9:00PM

\$15 / MOLAA MEMBERS FREE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

FREE ADMISSION

1:00 – 5:00PM

FOCUS WEEKEND - SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24

SOUTH BAY/LONG BEACH PST: LA/LA EXHIBITIONS

FOCUS WEEKEND EXHIBITION RELATED EVENTS AT MOLAA

SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24 (FREE ADMISSION TO MOLAA BOTH DAYS)

Saturday, September 23, 2017 | 1:00-4:00pm

Art of the Caribbean: A Conversation with Artists & Curators

Curators and Artists from throughout the Caribbean will converge virtually in this exploration of topics and issues related to the work in MOLAA's PST: LA/LA exhibition *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*.

FREE Admission

Target Free Sundays Presents: Caribbean Festival

Sunday, September 24, 2017 | 11:00am–5:00pm

Celebrate Latino Heritage Month at MOLAA with live performances, art workshops and craft vendors that represent the diversity of Caribbean cultures.

FREE Admission sponsored by Target.

Curator Insights: Relational Undercurrents with Tatiana Flores

Sunday, September 24, 2017 | 3:00–4:00pm

Tatiana Flores, Curator of MOLAA's Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA exhibition, *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago* leads visitors on a tour of the exhibition.

FREE Admission - Space is limited. First come, first served

Please sign up at the MOLAA Front Desk upon arrival.

Check-in takes place in the lobby at 2:45pm.

FOCUS WEEKEND - SOUTH BAY/LONG BEACH PST: LA/LA EXHIBITIONS
SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24
FREE SHUTTLE ART TOUR

Explore Latin American and Latinx Art in dialogue with Los Angeles Six PST: LA /LA art exhibitions at ESMoA, Angels Gate Cultural Center, Torrance Art Museum, Otis College of Art and Design, University Art Museum (CSULB), Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) will be connected via free shuttle bus service over the weekend of September 23-24, 2017. The offering makes it easy for the public to arrange and enjoy an art-filled day at no cost. That's the impetus behind the art weekend set up by the South Bay/Long Beach Hub (SB/LB Hub), a collective of local arts institutions produced in partnership with Getty-led Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA.

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is a far reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles. Supported by grants from the Getty Foundation, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA takes place from September 2017 through January 2018, at more than 70 cultural institutions across Southern California from Los Angeles to Palm Springs and from San Diego to Santa Barbara. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.



Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA)

The Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) was founded in 1996 in Long Beach, California and serves the greater Los Angeles area. MOLAA is the only museum in the United States dedicated to modern and contemporary Latin American art. Since its inception, MOLAA has doubled in size and continues to expand its permanent collection, ranging from works by Rufino Tamayo and Roberto Matta to Carlos Cruz-Diez, Tania Bruguera and Ramiro Gomez Jr. With its physical expansion complete, MOLAA's focus is on strengthening its position as a multidisciplinary institution providing cross-cultural dialogue.

Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamos Ave., Long Beach, Calif. 90802
Hours: Sun., Wed., Thurs. and Sat., 11:00am – 5:00pm, Friday, 11:00am - 9:00pm
Admission: \$10.00 General/ \$7.00 Students (w/ID) and seniors (65+) Members and kids under 12 Free
Free Admission every Sunday sponsored by Target
Info: (562) 437-1689 or www.molaa.org