



# YEAR FOUR

*Leimert Park, Los Angeles, CA*

Year Four presents a culmination of ideas and programs generated at Art + Practice in 2017. With support from A+P's collaborators, donors and friends, we are proud to share with you our mandate of supporting foster youth and providing the community with access to FREE museum-curated contemporary art.

ART + PRACTICE

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# NEED + ACCESS

## Art + Practice

*Need* and *access*—these words, although simple to define, carry heavy weight and meaning for Art + Practice, its founders and staff. Need and access help guide the stated direction of the organization including its art and foster youth programs, initiatives, and engagements.

A+P's consideration of need and access began in the early 2000s in a conversation among its founders, Mark Bradford, Allan DiCastro and Eileen Harris Norton. Together, they came to envision building a nonprofit organization that would support foster youth and share contemporary ideas with museum-curated (visual) art and public engagement. They would do this through qualified collaborations. A+P came to use these two simple words as tools to explain the mission of the organization in a snapshot. In short, A+P supports the needs of its local foster youth while providing the community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art.

At A+P, support for the foster youth program is run by the nonprofit's collaborator, First Place for Youth, a nonprofit foster youth social service provider. First Place supports A+P's local foster youth primarily in South Los Angeles through individualized job training, education support, and access to housing. Through this ongoing, rigorous and supportive methodology, foster youth are set up to succeed, despite the odds against them. First Place helps foster youth become independent and self-sufficient while building a community they can turn to in times of need. This support of addressing these young people's needs is changing the course

## AREA MAP



### ART + PRACTICE

Exhibition Space: 3401 West 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008 // Public Program Space: 4334 Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008 | [artandpractice.org](http://artandpractice.org)

### FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH

4337 Leimert Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008 | [firstplaceforyouth.org](http://firstplaceforyouth.org)



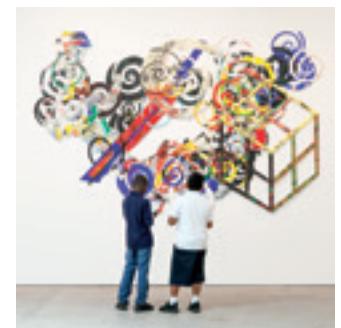
Art + Practice Advisor and Atom Factory's Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Troy Carter in conversation with First Place for Youth.

of how participants develop and interact with the world around them.

Access is provided to the public via free museum-curated exhibitions and public programs. Bradford, DiCastro and Norton designed a vision in which they engage with and welcome museum institutions, both locally, such as the Hammer Museum (2014–16), and nationally, such as the Baltimore Museum of Art and The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, to curate exhibitions in Leimert Park.

Our founders' efforts to engage with the contemporary art world create opportunities for Leimert Park's residents to be exposed to contemporary art in their own neighborhood, free of charge. Through these efforts, A+P hopes to inspire visitors to venture to other Los Angeles-based museums such as the California African American Museum (CAAM), the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), The Institute of Contemporary Art Los Angeles (ICA LA) and the Vincent Price Art Museum as well as nonprofits such as The Mistake Room, The Underground Museum, LAXART and others. Our founders envision A+P not as the end point, but as the incubator in which Leimert Park becomes engaged with contemporary art and visiting other museum institutions.

To further engage access within the realm of our mandate, A+P reached out to its local youth in 2017. A+P provided nearby educators and students (grades 3–12) with planned



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Local students attend the exhibition *Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s.* (1)

Artist Leonardo Drew in conversation with The Baltimore Museum of Art's Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director Christopher Bedford. (2)



visits to A+P's exhibition space. A+P worked with local educator Karina Esperanza Yáñez to design a series of teacher resource guides and student handouts that helped guide educators and students through A+P's bilingual exhibition with artist Ruben Ochoa, titled *SAMPLED y SURVEYED*. This program engaged A+P's local youth with hopes of capturing their interests and curiosities while learning about contemporary art in their own community.

**MARK BRADFORD,  
EILEEN HARRIS  
NORTON and ALLAN  
DICASTRO**

*Left to Right*  
Founded by artist  
Mark Bradford,  
philanthropist and  
collector Eileen Harris  
Norton, and community  
activist Allan DiCastro,  
A+P is an arts and  
education private  
operating foundation  
based in Leimert  
Park, Los Angeles, CA.  
(Above)

Art + Practice's  
exhibition space at  
3401 W. 43rd Place,  
Los Angeles, CA 90008.  
(Facing page, top)

Art + Practice's public  
program space at 4334  
Degnan Boulevard, Los  
Angeles, CA 90008.  
(Facing page, bottom)

Access also plays a role in supporting the vision and initiatives of A+P's public programs. Organized to coincide with exhibitions at A+P, the nonprofit, in collaboration with museums, welcomes artists, curators, educators and visionaries to A+P's public program space in conversations, presentations, performances, and screenings. All programming is free and made available for attendees to experience, enjoy, and engage with the ideas generated and discussed throughout the year.

Although access is often tied to contemporary art programs and need to foster youth programs at A+P the founders also seek to apply these ideas inversely as well—addressing need with contemporary art and access with foster youth programs.

In 2017, A+P and First Place co-founded a collaborative program to provide foster youth with short-term, paid internships in A+P's exhibition space. Launched during the run of *SAMPLED y SURVEYED* (September 9, 2017 to January 27, 2018), foster youth were selected by First Place, provided with a security guard card, first aid and CPR training, and hired and placed at A+P. The interns stationed in A+P's exhibition space provide security and support for the exhibitions program, including assisting with visitor engagement.

While addressing foster youths' need for employment, this internship also provides foster youth with access to the contemporary art world. In addition to their security duties, foster youth assist A+P's staff with conditioning the artworks, guiding visitors





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through the exhibition space and ushering at public programs. Exposing foster youth to A+P's contemporary art programs encourages these young people to consider job opportunities that they might not have otherwise. The existing cohort of interns will work at A+P for four months. Upon completing the internship, A+P will welcome a new round of interns from First Place.

As access is provided through A+P's foster youth programs, need is also incorporated into the design of A+P's contemporary art programs. A+P considers its museum-curated exhibition and public program spaces unique in South Los Angeles. There are few contemporary art spaces that the community can easily access. By utilizing its space in Leimert Park, A+P works with its museum collaborators to program exhibitions and public programs that highlight the talent of artists. A+P's efforts to provide a contemporary art space in South Los Angeles is an expansion of the existing culture already present in Leimert Park.

At A+P, need and access are the incubators of change in the context of their vision statement—the words that put programs into action and the driving force that moves A+P's mission forward. With year four completed, A+P will continue to develop mission-related programs surrounding need and access as applied in Los Angeles and with its foster youth participants.

Visitors attend an exhibition walkthrough with artist Ruben Ochoa and curator César García. (1)

Artist Shinique Smith participates in a public program at Art + Practice. (2)

Select members of First Place for Youth's staff pictured at 4337 Leimert Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008. (3)

First Place for Youth's 'Wall of Fame' event, honoring foster youth excelling in First Place for Youth's *My First Place* program. (4)

Local elementary students visit the exhibition *Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s* for a field trip. (5)



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# LEIMERT PARK '17



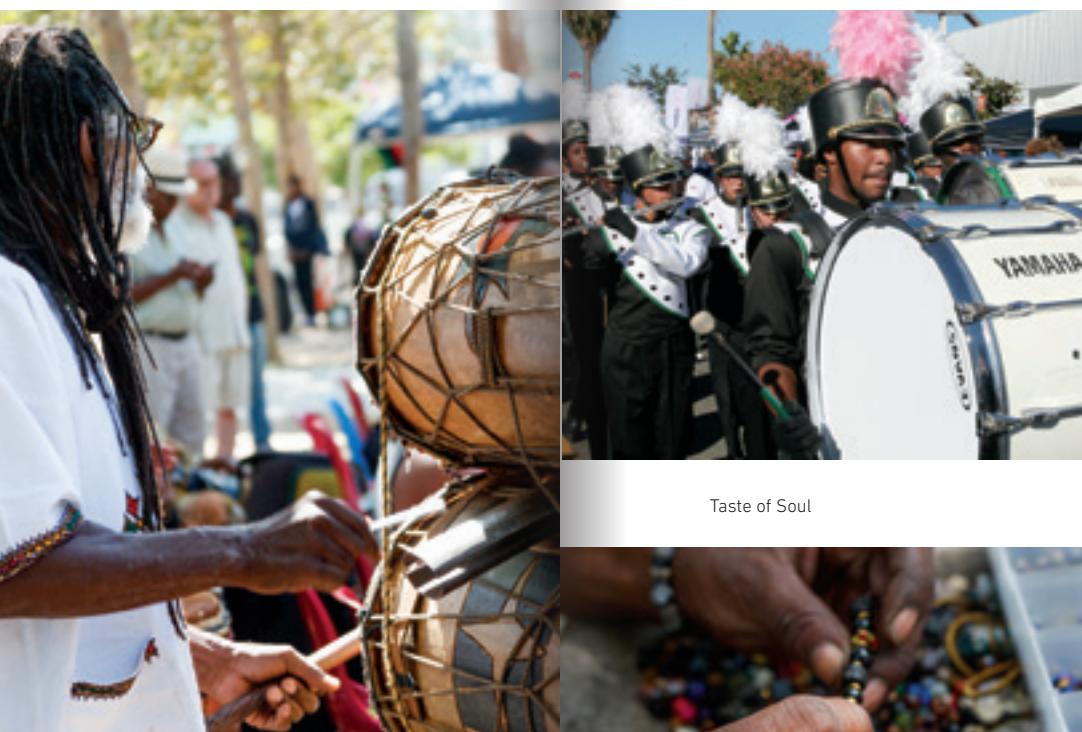
Jazz musician and performer Barbara Morrison opens the California Jazz and Blues Museum.



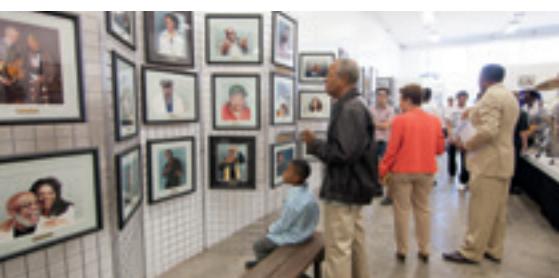
Viver Brasil performs *Samba in the Streets* in Leimert Park.



Leimert Park celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day along Crenshaw Boulevard.



Taste of Soul



Grand opening of the California Jazz and Blues Museum.



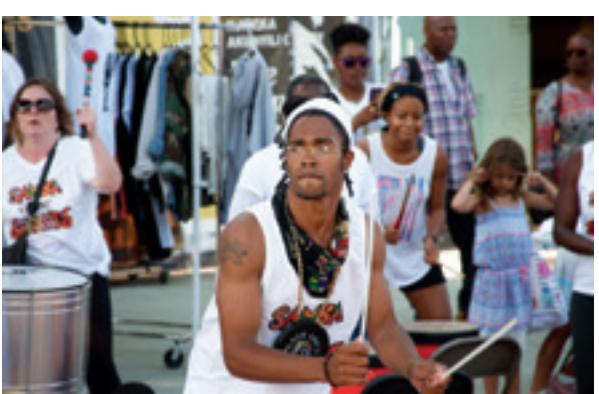
Voices from Leimert Park Redux book launch.



Leimert Park Village African Arts and Music Festival on Labor Day weekend.



Local dancers and musicians perform in Leimert Park.

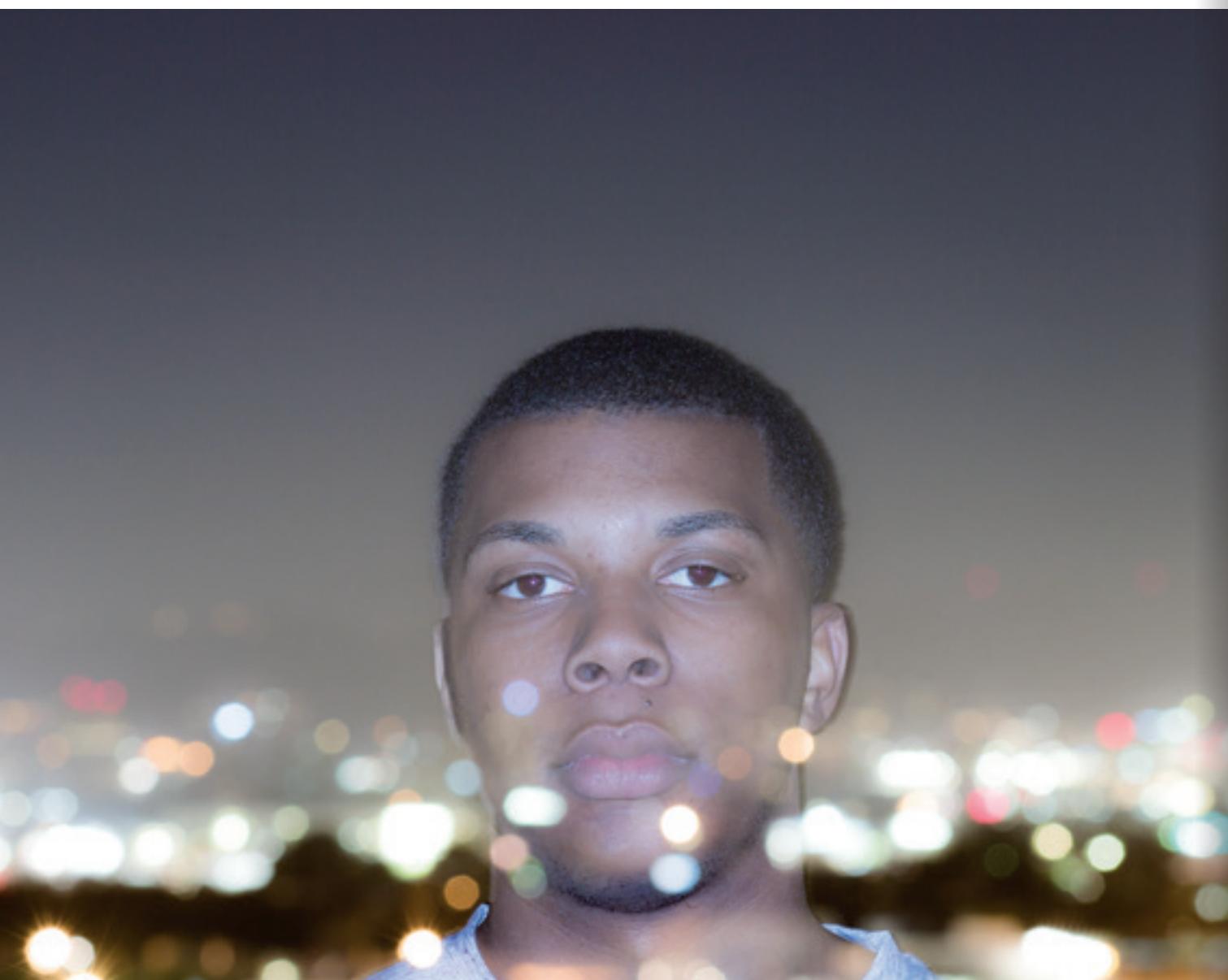


In 2017, Leimert Park Village hosted a series of events, including the celebration of and parade for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the opening of Barbara Morrison's California Jazz and Blues Museum, summer classes for *Samba in the Streets* on the People Street, Leimert Park Village African Arts and Music Festival, Voices from Leimert Park Redux book launch and the food festival Taste of Soul. Art + Practice is pleased to share with you images that capture some of these events, their attendees and community leaders.

For more information about upcoming events, visit [leimertparkvillage.org](http://leimertparkvillage.org).



# ART AS A CHANNEL TO SUCCESS



*8 seconds*, 2017

I am torn between the need to record an entire moment or capture a fraction of a second. Nevertheless, I continue to use still photography as my primary medium, as opposed to moving pictures. Keeping the shutter open for an extended period of time allows me to negotiate these thought processes without committing to one or the other.

For *8 seconds*, I like to think of the light as a representation of the many things in my life that have transpired—good and bad. I have mainly lived in Los Angeles, and I like to believe that the city and I have a connection. It takes care of me and I take care of it.



*Untitled*, 2017

My first visit to a museum through the lens of being an artist was to view *The Perfect Medium*, a solo exhibition by artist Robert Mapplethorpe that included artworks from the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and The Getty Museum. My time spent viewing the artworks had great significance for me. It initiated my understanding of the arts and helped me develop my own beliefs of what art can be. I continue to enjoy learning about contemporary art and exploring the many facets of the art world.



*Untitled*, 2017

My sister has faced many challenges and roadblocks in her life. Even through these struggles, I see much beauty, love, and positive energy in her. Our susceptibility to negativity often limits our imagination of what is possible, but I have yet to see that defeat in my sister. When met with others who attempt to nullify her, she validates herself, needing no other reason than "I said so." I see true resilience in a person who refuses to sacrifice herself for anyone's opinion of her. She is a person whom I admire and aspire to be more like.



*Untitled*, 2017

In the time spent with one another, I have come to see light as not falling onto my partner's skin, but as emanating from within. The women in my life have fundamentally shaped who I am today. Throughout life, I have encountered many women who offer empathy and words of encouragement to me as a form of therapy. They have helped shape me into the man I am today.



TEENS JOBS, 2017

If you were to walk the streets of a low-income neighborhood, you would see the different ways in which others are taking advantage of those communities. In some ways, I regret the things I have learned by living in these communities. Through my education as both a student and artist, I have developed a sort of cynical smoke screen in front of my eyes. Sometimes, I see the areas in which people of color live as less of a community and more of a petri dish, used for the observation and experimentation of all things that could be detrimental to society.

Low-income neighborhoods are infested with *TEEN JOBS* signs, promising up to five hundred dollars per week. These signs give an ominous sense of danger to the targeted age group described. Whether the signs advertise scams made for the exploitation of child labor or fronts for human trafficking, they put youth at risk for the benefit of the treacherous businesses advertising their offerings to vulnerable individuals.



## ABOUT JOSIAH GREEN

### ART + PRACTICE'S COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

The majority of my schooling occurred at nonpublic schools. Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) sent my peers and me to schools to provide us with special education services supposedly designed to fit our needs. This act of separating me from other students created a great deficit in how I developed academically. I fell behind.

A nonpublic school can include elementary to high school students. Teachers often provide students with easy, irrelevant schoolwork, commonly resulting in students failing high school exit exams until they are waived. As a result, none of my fellow classmates have completed their GED, or are still enrolled in community college. Students placed in these kinds of schools experience little preparation for the outside world.

Although the primary goal of a nonpublic school is to manage student behavior, a few teachers do strive to provide a quality education. One of those educators was Mr. Harry Hendrickson, my teacher and dear friend. As I searched and struggled for direction, Mr. Hendrickson took an interest in me and provided me with the opportunity to engage in animation and the digital arts. With his help, I learned the operations of the animation pipeline and how to use various digital imaging tools. Today, four years later, I still use these skills in my practice. I am grateful for Mr. Hendrickson's help.

After completing my schooling at my nonpublic high school, I enrolled in Santa Monica College. I began my studies by taking classes in computer animation. I lacked the confidence to enroll in any general academic classes (math, English, science, etc.), and when I did, I quickly dropped them. It was not until I began working for the Hammer Museum as a Visitor Experience Representative that I experienced a change.

While working for the museum, I developed a sense of self-confidence that lent itself to academic strength. I was exposed to new ideas and opportunities, including public programs, curatorial content, and the many jobs that make up the art world. Inspired by my new sense of self-confidence, I enrolled in math, English, and history classes at Santa Monica College. I saw a significant improvement in my academic performance. I began achieving milestones that a younger me would not have thought possible. I continue to further my development and am working at Art + Practice as the Communications Intern, while actively working toward transferring to a four-year university.

In the beginning of my schooling at Santa Monica College, I continued to search for an artistic medium that best suited my need to express myself. I experimented with dance, music, animation, and sculpture. During this process, I was fortunate to have support from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to explore these mediums. I have always known my place in the world was to be an artist, but I found it difficult to identify with one medium in particular. Finally, while almost out of luck, I tried photography and it stuck.

After taking up photography, those around me have noticed an increase in my personal development and self-confidence. Photography has become the avenue that I use to express myself and my experience of living in Los Angeles. My peers and I are in need of more channels of expression, not only for emotional support, but also for representing ourselves more accurately in a world where we are often forgotten. Photography helps me visualize my thoughts, and it has helped shape me into the person I am today. I will continue to use photography as my chosen medium to shed light on my experience, making visible the issues present in our world.



# SPIRAL PLAY: LOVING IN THE '80s

Christopher Bedford and Katy Siegel

*Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s* was presented by Art + Practice and The Baltimore Museum of Art

All images courtesy of the Estate of Al Loving and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

Al Loving, *Humbird*, 1989. Mixed media on board, 72 x 100 inches.

# SPIRAL PLAY: *LOVING IN THE '80s*

"Jazz musicians are people who make a radical use of conventional instruments... They take what is available and they do something that is more suitable to them. That connection exists between art and jazz... I play. Playing is a very real part of it. Art is extremely hard to do and that play thing is nice."

Al Loving (2002)

In 1968, Al Loving, a freshly minted MFA from the University of Michigan moved to New York City, and amid the ferment of an art world preoccupied with developments in abstract painting, found fast success. Less than a year after his move to New York, Loving was offered a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Here he showed the hard-edge geometric paintings that defined the first phase of his career. The exhibition was met with considerable acclaim, so much so that he had to hire studio assistants to meet the demand for his work.

Despite his rapid ascendance, Loving felt dissatisfied with his own achievements. The rigidity of his geometric vocabulary, though very much of his own making, came to represent an unwelcomed orthodoxy to the artist, one that made his work legible, timely and desirable in late '60s New York, yet felt unnatural to his own aspiration to break free. "I felt stuck inside the box," Loving said. "I mean, this was 1968—the Democratic Convention, this is war—and I'm doing these pictures. The contradiction between my life at that time and these pictures!" Most striking here is the consonance Loving demanded between his work as a painter and his experience of a world in the grip of political unrest. He wanted one to register the other and so in the 1970s, Loving discovered a method of working with torn, dyed, and sewn canvas, drawing on African American quilting traditions, and rendering his paintings less academic and more vibrant, immediate, and present. Of this decision, Loving observed, "The decision to move

Unknown Photographer,  
Al Loving, c. 1975-79.





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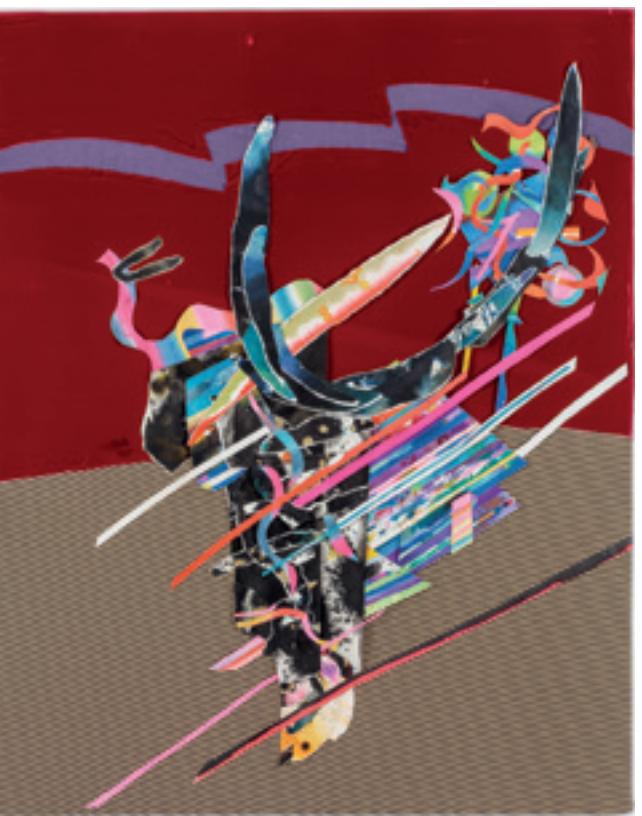
"I don't think I'm a painter. I make things; that's African. The ability to make things in the abstract."

Al Loving (1988)

Al Loving, *Untitled*, 1982. Mixed media, 60 1/4 x 48 inches. (1)

Al Loving, *Untitled*, c. 1982-1984. Mixed media, 60 1/4 x 48 inches. (2)

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Al Loving, *Soweto #1*, c. 1980. Paper collage, 43 x 52 inches.



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away from that kind of rigid formalist view had to do with whether there is black art and what does it look like. What is your art like if it comes from itself, if you cannot perceive its roots?" By "roots" he meant the 3,000 years of art history he assimilated as an undergraduate and then as a graduate student. To transcend that condition, Loving forged an amalgam of personal experience, intuition, formal recklessness and a deliberate embrace of unknowing to make his own path, one that felt true to his whole self.

This rejection of the dominant art history in favor of a personal story reaches a crescendo for Loving a decade later. The present exhibition focuses on those years, the 1980s, a period that saw Loving break free of the flat image, using heavy rag paper to make three dimensional collages in brilliant colors. These large scale wall-bound constructions spin off the wall, expanding into three-dimensions. Reconciling geometry and life through an embrace of organic form, these collages are radical, beautiful, and deeply human, achieving the balance of formal innovation and social presentness that had been the artist's central aspiration from the late 1960s on. In Loving's words, "I chose the spiral as a symbol of life's continuity. It became an overall wish for everyone." Unlike his hard-edge work from the 1960s, and even the torn canvases from the 1970s, Loving's work from the

'80s is animate, ecstatic and unguarded, their means of construction bold and self-evident, and their dissociation from the look and feel of the work being made by his peers truly striking. The spiral was at once a formal motif and a symbol, in his account, derived from a trip to Cuba where he saw its use in Afro-Caribbean religious symbols. Another essential element was play, a key factor that Loving returns to again and again in interviews. "I play," he says. "Playing is a very real part of it. Art is very hard to do. Art is extremely hard to do and that play thing is nice."

Looking back at his development, Loving began to associate geometry as a compositional feature with a logic extrinsic to his own consciousness, assimilated from elsewhere and inauthentic to him as a maker. In contrast, the admixture of cosmopolitan influences, organic forms, and an embrace of play felt to him like a break with art history, and therefore a rewriting of that story from a singular subject position: his own. Loving's work from the 1980s, shown exclusively in this exhibition, reveals an artist working free from the constraints of good taste, conventional intellection, the four corners of the canvas, and the expectation of commercial reward, to create a body of work that leaps off the wall, more present now than ever before.



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"The spiral is a political icon that became part of my work after a trip to Cuba in 1985. [Spirals are common in Afro-Caribbean religious imagery.] I chose the spiral as a symbol of life's continuity. It became an overall wish for everyone."

Al Loving (2004)

Al Loving, *Mercer Street VII, #9*, 1988.  
Paper collage, 43 1/4 x 28 inches. (1)

Al Loving, *Untitled*, c. 1980.  
Mixed media on paper collage,  
27 x 32 inches. (2)

Al Loving, *Johnson City*, 1982.  
Mixed media on paper collage,  
35 x 32 inches. (3)

Al Loving, *James*, 1989.  
Acrylic on paper collage,  
87 x 32 inches. (4)



*Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s.* Installation view, Art + Practice, Los Angeles, CA, April 22 - July 29, 2017.



Al Loving, *Greg & Greg*, 1989.  
Mixed media on paper collage, 32 x 86 inches.

## AL LOVING BIOGRAPHY

Alvin Loving was born in Detroit in 1935. He received his MFA at the University of Michigan, training in an Abstract Expressionist gestural painting style. In 1968, Loving moved to New York City to engage in a more active dialogue with his peers, and shifted to a hard-edge geometric mode. After less than a year in New York, he was offered a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of Art, which won critical acclaim. Despite his success, Loving felt trapped inside "the box" of geometric abstraction at a charged political moment - as if his art and his life were out of alignment. In the

1970s, he discovered a method of working with torn, dyed, and sewn canvas, drawing on quilting traditions, that rendered his paintings more vibrant and immediate. From the 1980s onward, Loving experimented with large scale collages that expanded into space, reconciling geometry and an expression of life force through profound and playful organic form.

"I've opened new boundaries by being a 'shape' artist. That is, most of my work is outside of the rectangle... Shape is not an intellectual idea. It just happens, and there is no going back. I feel my work gives the viewer a sense of freedom, mentally and physically, there is a sense of weightlessness, which is a strong concern of mine."

Al Loving (2004)

### ABOUT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART (BMA)

The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the BMA today has 95,000 objects—including the largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse. Throughout the museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of American and European painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; works by established and emerging contemporary artists; significant artworks from China; stunning Antioch mosaics; and an exceptional collection of art from Africa. The BMA's galleries also showcase examples from one of the nation's finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs, and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square foot museum is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped sculpture gardens. As a major cultural destination for the region, the BMA hosts a dynamic program of exhibitions, events, and educational programs throughout the year. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART  
10 Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218  
[artbma.org](http://artbma.org) | Hours: Wednesday - Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm.



# IN MEMORIAM: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RODNEY BRIMBERRY

On September 9, 2017, Rodney Brimberry, founder and owner of Brimberry Barber and Beauty Salon in Leimert Park Village, passed away peacefully in his home. With his passing, the community of Leimert Park lost a hardworking, caring, and dedicated barber. In *Year Four*, Art + Practice pays tribute to Rodney Brimberry through an interview with Mrs. Earnestine Brimberry.

My loving husband Rodney Brimberry was born in Vienna, Georgia on August 14, 1956, the youngest of seven siblings. He grew up with his grandmother Annie Mae Kitchen, along with his cousin Joann Coley. Rodney's grandmother always kept a watchful and loving eye on her grandchildren.

Rodney's grandmother was an excellent cook who cooked not only for her grandchildren, but also for the other families in the neighborhood. In her later years, she lost the ability to cook herself and instead orchestrated meals from a chair. Rodney would take orders from his grandmother, moving throughout the kitchen as directed. He learned a great deal about cooking from his grandmother.

In addition to being a wonderful cook, Rodney's grandmother was a caregiver for some of the elders and children in Vienna. She took great pride in treating others with kindness and respect. Rodney's grandmother instilled these values in my husband—to treat others how you want to be treated and never let people go hungry.

Rodney moved to Los Angeles, California from Vienna in 1971, along with his mother and siblings. He graduated from Hollywood High School in 1974. Shortly thereafter, he became a cook, starting as a busboy and eventually working his way to head chef. Rodney would often cook meals for me, and believe me, I needed a

Customers wait to have their hair cut by master barber Rodney Brimberry at Brimberry Barber and Beauty Salon.

hazmat suit when he was finished in the kitchen—usually it looked like a tornado had gone through! Although Rodney had a particular style of cooking, the meals he prepared always tasted delicious. He was a wonderful cook. Then in the 1980s, after working as a cook for many years in a Beverly Hills restaurant, Rodney got a message from God. Rodney always said, “God talked to him, and told him that he needed to become a barber.” My husband took this Godly advice, left his job as a cook, and enrolled in barber and cosmetology school. He graduated at the top of his class and began working as a barber in a shop off Crenshaw Boulevard.

Before continuing, I should mention that my husband loved Leimert Park. He appreciated that all his favorite places were close, including his church (West Angeles Church), coffee shop (Starbucks), movie theater (Baldwin Hills Movie Theater), and other neighborhood places. He was very proud of his community and never considered another place to live or work in Los Angeles. Often, Rodney would recommend local merchants to his clients, stating, “You need to get your car fixed? I have the name of the best car mechanic in town. It’s in Leimert Park!”

As I mentioned, Rodney started his career as a barber along Crenshaw Boulevard. Shortly after Rodney began his barbershop career, he developed an extensive following of clients and was able to open his own barbershop. In fact, he ran three barber shops at once during the 1980s and early 1990s. At this time, he married his first wife, Linda Pope, and raised three children: daughter, Tasha Pope and sons, Hassan Pope and Jason Brimberry. These were busy years for my husband. I don’t know how he managed it all.

In the 1990s, Rodney returned to Georgia for a short period. I am not entirely sure what prompted his move or why he shut down his barbershop businesses in Los Angeles. I think he was just homesick for Georgia. While in Georgia, Rodney worked in a barbershop for three years, but he always kept Los Angeles in the back of his mind.

Rodney was inspired to move back to Los Angeles after his sister, Gloria Brimberry, moved from Paris to Los Angeles in the late 1990s. Gloria had worked as an atelier for the major fashion houses in Paris. When she moved to Los Angeles, however, Gloria decided to make a career shift. She graduated with her law degree, passed the California bar exam and



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Rodney Brimberry in Brimberry Barber and Beauty Salon in Leimert Park Village. (1-2)

Left to Right  
Rodney Brimberry and Earnestine Brimberry. (3)

settled at a law firm in Century City as their first African American female attorney. Rodney admired his older sister. She was a big inspiration for him. Gloria was the person who first encouraged Rodney to start his own business and take ownership of his efforts and ideas.

Now, in thinking back about Rodney’s work in the existing barbershop and beauty salon along Degnan Boulevard, after his return to Los Angeles, I remember that just before moving to the current space, Rodney was renting a barber chair from a friend at a barbershop on Crenshaw Boulevard. The shop was tiny and held three chairs. Rodney’s friend was happy to rent a chair to Rodney, but one day when Rodney’s friend came into work on a Saturday, there was a long line of customers waiting by the door and out on the street. When Rodney’s friend asked those people standing in line if any of them were there to see him, no one stepped forward. Rodney’s friend said, “Rodney, are all these people here to see you?” Indeed they were. Rodney’s friend knew Rodney had a dedicated following of clients, but he did not know to what extent. He encouraged Rodney to re-open his own shop.

Rodney rented 3401 W. 43rd Place from Mr. Kim in the early 2010s. The space had previously housed a beauty salon, but had been vacant for many years. I remember walking into the space for the first time. There were a few milk crates scattered around, some beauty chairs and lots of trash and dust. We cleaned the place up and worked hard to make it ready for business. Shortly after opening, however, I realized that Rodney needed a barber chair. His male clients needed to spread out and the women’s beauty chairs were too dainty. Rodney got a barber chair soon afterwards.

My husband was known as a master barber long before we married in 2001. I knew my husband was skilled, but I did not realize how skilled he really was until I met and spoke with his clients. They valued his work. Where he went, they went. I have deep respect for my husband and his craft. I enjoyed watching him turn on the clippers and cut his customers’ hair. He stood proud and tall with the clippers in his hand, always giving special attention to each of his clients. Rodney enjoyed cutting hair, but I think what he enjoyed most were the people. He was a people person

who loved learning about their stories and sharing some of his own wisdom. When people sat in his chair, he was going to ask them about their life and share his own story, too.

In addition to his passion for working in his barbershop and beauty salon, Rodney enjoyed working and supporting the homeless. Rodney took supplies and food to people living in Leimert Park and elsewhere around Los Angeles. Sometimes Rodney would even welcome those living on the streets to his shop. He would cut their hair, talk to them and counsel them. Rodney had a big heart and enjoyed helping others in need.

As I look toward the future, I know that I, our children—daughter, Teairra Knox-Cole and sons, Michael Johnson Sr. and Brian Knox—our extended family and friends will always miss my husband. He was a giant of a man and a person full of heart. As the new owner of Brimberry Barber and Beauty Salon, I am going to work hard to keep his vision alive. I will do my best to try and maintain his legacy. He is deeply missed by all who knew him.



Exterior view of Brimberry Barber and Beauty Salon. The Salon is located adjacent to Art + Practice’s exhibition space.

#### BRIMBERRY BARBER AND BEAUTY SALON

3401 West 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008 | (323) 293-3974  
Hours: Monday - Sunday: 8 am - 6 pm.



# PORTRAITS

First Place for Youth

First Place for Youth's Education and Employment Specialists, Youth Advocates and Foster Youth in Leimert Park, Los Angeles.

# DAVID

## 15 MONTHS IN MY FIRST PLACE

"To be honest, I don't know what I would have done without First Place," says David, a First Place participant and former office intern at First Place for Youth's programming space on Art + Practice's campus.

David was only three when he entered foster care, and though he was adopted at age five, the early upheaval he experienced had lasting effects. Growing up in a neighborhood where gang activity was a common occurrence, David was repeatedly exposed to violence and struggled to make good decisions. As a teenager, he entered the juvenile justice system. The strain this caused in his relationship with his adoptive family increased and resulted in David bouncing again from foster home to foster home, never finding the stability he so needed. Even while moving between several group homes, David continued to pursue his high school diploma, but he didn't know where he would go when he turned 18. That's when he heard about First Place for Youth.

First Place helped David get settled and stable in his first apartment and he started working with his Youth Advocate and Education and Employment Specialist. With this support, David was able to begin planning for the future in a way he'd never thought possible. "It's teaching me responsibility and priorities," David says, and he's even using what he's learned to mentor his younger friends to make better decisions. David completed First

Place's job readiness program, and applied and was selected for the paid internship program through which he built his professional office skills. At the same time, he enrolled at Los Angeles City College with plans to transfer to USC, where he'll continue his studies in criminal justice and music.

Just one year after arriving at First Place, David has learned how to set goals and follow through, and he trusts his ability to make good choices. So what's next for David? He is working on getting his driver's license and saving money to buy a car. The support of First Place has helped broaden his horizons, and he's looking forward to seeing more of the world, because as he says, "First Place helped me be inspired."



# PRECIOUS

## 13+ MONTHS IN MY FIRST PLACE

At an age when many kids are nervous about transitioning from middle school to high school, Precious' life changed for another reason. Her principal noticed signs of physical abuse, leading to Precious and her sister opening up about their home life, and ultimately being removed from their mother's care. Later, in high school, Precious became a mother herself, and when she turned 18 in foster care, she sought a way to build a more stable life for herself and her three-month-old son than moving between relatives' homes, relying on extended family for help. That's when Precious' social worker told her about First Place for Youth.

Still adjusting to life as a young mother, moving into her First Place apartment was also a big change for Precious, and one that brought stability. She admits to being apprehensive at first about the program's expectation that participants commit to intensive work with their Youth Advocate (case manager) and their Education and Employment Specialist (EE): "I didn't think I was going to like it—the visits to your apartment, meeting with someone every week. But it helps you out a lot. They push you to follow your dreams. They help you out with life. We have a good bond."

Though she finally had a safe, stable home, Precious struggled to find consistent childcare that would allow her to focus on education and career goals. Precious' Youth Advocate

Tyana guided her through the process of applying for childcare with a partner agency, while working on parenting skills such as child safety and nutrition. Precious met weekly with her EE to develop job readiness skills, and took general education classes two days a week.

When regular childcare was finally secured, Precious was able to take larger steps toward preparing for her lifelong dream of being a firefighter. She completed a training program to further build workplace skills and practice interviewing, and enrolled at El Camino College to earn certification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). With that certificate and the emergency response experience it brings, Precious will be on track to reaching her ultimate goal.

In the First Place program, Precious is excited about the steps she's taken toward her goals, and is grateful for the stability First Place has enabled her to give her son: "I love that he has his own space to grow up." Her progress illustrates the importance of long-term support for foster youth who are striving to overcome significant barriers and find their path to a brighter future.





# JORDAN

**13+ MONTHS IN MY FIRST PLACE**

Jordan was only ten when his father died, and while he did his best to adapt to life without his father's guidance, it wasn't easy. "Not having my dad there forced me to be stronger, but it also made me weaker," says Jordan. "I feel like if he were here, a lot of stuff wouldn't have happened."

As Jordan entered his teen years, his relationship with his mother deteriorated and he began engaging in self-destructive behaviors and entered foster care as a teenager. After more than two years of living in various group homes and at times, living with an aunt, Jordan chose to take control of his own life and build skills toward independence.

"You can't grow up without experiencing grown-up stuff," Jordan says. First Place for Youth offered him the opportunity to gain that experience, secure in the knowledge that his team at First Place was by his side.

Since joining First Place through the Foster Youth Practice Space at Art + Practice in November 2016, Jordan has been able to focus on setting and working toward his goals. Since he walked through the doors of First Place's office, Jordan has already made incredible strides toward the life he wants. He secured his first job, started his first semester at El Camino College and, with the help of his First Place Youth Advocate, re-connected with his mother after a year apart. And if that's not enough to keep one busy, Jordan also has his

eyes on a career in the music industry. Much of what spare time he has is spent writing and practicing in the studio.

"Having a roof over my head has really helped," says Jordan of the role that First Place has played in his new, more stable lifestyle. "At the end of the day, I can come home and not have to worry because I have a safe place to be."

# MARIYA

**5+ YEARS WORKING AT FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH**



Mariya Libman oversees First Place for Youth's South Los Angeles team on Art + Practice's campus, supervising five masters-level social workers known as Youth Advocates, along with the team at the newest First Place Compton location. A licensed clinical social worker, Mariya chose this field because she was motivated by social justice issues as well as her passion to work with young people. An internship exposed her to the intersection of foster care and the juvenile justice system, especially about the need for services for older youth entering adulthood without a supportive family or the skills to support themselves. When Mariya heard about First Place's mission and results-focused practice, she knew she wanted to work there.

Mariya started when there were just nine employees on the First Place Los Angeles team, in what was meant to be a temporary position. Now, nearly five years later, the staff has more than tripled in size and Mariya is a key member of the Los Angeles leadership team as they expand services to meet the needs of the growing population of youth who turn 18 while in the foster care system. Mariya knows that by doing this work, she is building better futures for these young people. She shares, "There is such a large number of foster youth living in Los Angeles—and they do not have stable, reliable adults in their lives to help guide them and their choices. We provide that, along with stable housing and other support so they can succeed."

Mariya worked as a Youth Advocate for three years, supporting 56 First Place participants, many of whom have stayed in touch and still reach out to her for advice and guidance. As a manager, Mariya's support of direct services staff allows her to continue working with youth every day. She is quick to share what she enjoys most: "I love working with young people, helping them overcome their challenges, and especially celebrating the milestones with them." First Place staff understand the importance of acknowledging accomplishments of all sizes on the road to success, from landing that first job, to getting a driver's license, to earning a vocational certificate or college degree. Mariya adds, "Before I worked here, I never understood how I took holidays and celebrations for granted—with youth who've had unstable situations, [celebrations] really matter." As First Place for Youth continues to grow to serve even more youth in South Los Angeles and beyond, there will be many more milestones to celebrate.

# FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH

FOSTER YOUTH SOCIAL SERVICE COLLABORATOR AT ART + PRACTICE

In year four, Art + Practice's foster youth social service collaborator, First Place for Youth supported the needs of 122 foster youth in just South Los Angeles. First Place's Southern California team, which employs 16 social workers, provides foster youth with individualized housing, education and employment support through its nationally recognized foster youth program, *My First Place*.

Founded in 1998, First Place for Youth is a nonprofit organization helping foster youth build the skills they need to make a successful transition to self-sufficiency and responsible adulthood. First Place supports foster youth, ages 18 to 24, at a critical time in their lives when they need to learn to support themselves. *My First Place* provides foster youth with access to safe, affordable housing combined with intensive, weekly case management, individualized education and employment support, and job development and linked learning opportunities. With results-driven service to foster youth, First Place is helping to change public policies that improve the lives and reshape the landscape for foster youth living in California.

## ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The second in a series of round table discussions organized in collaboration with First Place for Youth and Art + Practice invited entrepreneur and music manager Troy Carter for a conversation centered around the theme of resilience and hustle in the music, entertainment and tech industries.

*Left to Right*  
Art + Practice's Advisor Troy Carter with First Place for Youth's Executive Director for the Southern California Region, Hellen Hong. (1)

## INTERNSHIPS OFFERED BY FIRST PLACE FOR YOUTH

In 2017, First Place for Youth sought paid-internships for its participating foster youth in their local community. This included a pilot internship program with Art + Practice.

First Place for Youth celebrates its 'Wall of Fame' event. (2)



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# EDUCATION AT ART + PRACTICE

In 2017, Art + Practice invited its local schools, students (grades 3-12) and educators to experience, analyze and engage with exhibitions on view in Leimert Park. A+P designed and provided educators with teacher resource guides that included grade appropriate student handouts incorporating the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) and English Language Arts (ELA) Standards for California Public Schools. Local arts educator Karina Esperanza Yáñez worked with A+P to design the pilot education program, including content resource materials for teachers and student handouts.

Local students and educator Karina Esperanza Yáñez attend exhibitions at Art + Practice.

## TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: 3rd - 5th Grades

SELF-GUIDED TOUR	
<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Students are able to apply their knowledge of the elements of art within the work of Ruben Ochoa and begin interpreting his pieces.	
<b>ACTIVITY:</b> Student Handout [provided by Art + Practice]	
<b>1. Group Discussions (5-7 minutes)</b>	
	<p>As a class, students should spend 3 minutes discussing a selected work of art quietly. While viewing the work of art, ask students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you see?</li> <li>- Students should be encouraged to express their thoughts in complete sentences and be descriptive as possible. (If time...)   - Teacher should utilize the following resources. (Student said...)</li> <li>- Ask, "What more can you find?" if students need guidance or run out of answers. This will encourage students to be more careful in examining the artwork for meaningful interpretations.</li> <li>- Teacher should encourage students to use key phrases and vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p>• What do you think about that?</p> <p>• What does it make you wonder?</p> <p>• What similarities do you see between Ochoa's artwork and our city's infrastructure?</p>
<b>2. Individual Small Group Discussions of the exhibition (5-10 minutes)</b>	
	<p>Instruct students to read the didactics and reference the exhibition brochure. Students should explore both gallery spaces, discussing the artwork and completing the Student Handout. (Encourage the teacher to walk around and answer students' questions to make sure they are fully engaging with the artworks.)</p>
<b>3. Focus Question (20 minutes)</b>	
	<p>Bring the class back together and state the following:</p> <p>During an interview, Ochoa was asked: "Your work seems specifically invested in Los Angeles – its social, ecological, urbanistic, and financial. What are some of your thoughts on this city as a hub and as a site of art-making?"</p> <p>Independent, students should write a short response to this question using the "notes" section on the back of the handout. They should discuss their answers with a peer. If time allows, pair two or three students to share their responses.</p> <p>After discussion, distribute the provided cards with Ochoa's response to the question above. Ask a student to read the response aloud.</p>
<b>EVIDENCE OF LEARNING:</b> Students use guided questions to have a constructive conversation regarding the artwork.	
POST VISIT	
<b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Students are able to form new constructive ideas.	
<b>ACTIVITY:</b> Post visit Discussion	
	<p>What similarities do you see between Ochoa's artworks and our city's infrastructure?</p>
<b>EVIDENCE OF LEARNING:</b> Students are able to make distinctive connections between how the elements of art are used within the context of Ochoa's aesthetics and how that influences how the artwork are interpreted.	
<b>HANDS ON PROJECT:</b> Have students create a small sculpture using found objects. It is encouraged of students to manipulate the objects in such a way that their meaning is altered.	



# EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE GUIDES + HANDOUTS

## ART + PRACTICE'S EDUCATION CONSULTANT KARINA ESPERANZA YÁNEZ

INTERESTED IN  
SCHEDULING A VISIT  
TO APT. 1 PRACTICE?

Bring your class to explore the exhibitions on view in A+P's exhibition space.

To request a free field trip, please contact A+P at [education@artandpractice.org](mailto:education@artandpractice.org).

## QUESTIONS

Please email A+P  
at [education@artand-practice.org](mailto:education@artand-practice.org) or call  
(323) 337-6887.

The goal I have for students I work with is for them to break away from tradition and use art as a lens to re-imagine their world by thinking both conceptually and critically. I want my students to understand the rules, then question them in order for them to come to new realizations about their art, their world, and themselves.

I am constantly aiming to change the stigma that our community, and even our local schools, have towards the arts not being an important aspect of K-12 education. Simultaneously, I want students and their families to feel comfortable and welcomed in conceptual art spaces, such as Art + Practice. Through the teacher resource guides and

student handouts, I wanted to create an experience within the exhibition space and Ruben Ochoa's work that is familiar for both educators and students. These guides and handouts allow for students to engage in the creative process while making connections to a core subject matter such as the English Language Arts.

The teacher resource guides and student handouts are platforms where anyone can positively and comfortably engage with the artwork through arts integration while simultaneously bridging the gap between “the art world” and the community in Leimert Park and South Los Angeles.

*Left to Right*  
Art + Practice's  
teacher resource  
guides, grades 3-5  
and 11-12. (1)

*Left to Right*  
Art + Practice's  
student handouts,  
grades 6-8 and 9-10  
(2)

# KARINA ESPERANZA YÁNEZ

## BIOGRAPHY

Karina Esperanza Yáñez is an artist and teaching artist from South Central Los Angeles. She earned her Master's Degree in Art and Design Education from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and her Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts). Fascinated by history, race, gender, sociology, politics, and literature, Yáñez incorporates all of these interests in her work as much as possible. As a teaching artist, Yáñez provides her students with the tools to not only become creative in their own right as young artists, but also to engage with their community.



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# PUBLIC PROGRAMS

2017 PUBLIC PROGRAMS WERE ORGANIZED SO AS TO COINCIDE WITH ART + PRACTICE'S EXHIBITIONS ON VIEW IN THE EXHIBITION SPACE.

In 2017, Art + Practice organized a series of programs so as to coincide with A+P's two exhibitions *Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s* and *SAMPLED y SURVEYED*. These programs explored themes addressed by the contemporary art exhibited at A+P's exhibition space. Public programs include artist talks, panels, film screenings, and live performances.

A+P also collaborated with the California African American Museum (CAAM) to program an author talk and book signing with author, curator and Associate Professor in Art History and Archaeology and African American Studies at Columbia University, Dr. Kellie Jones, in conversation with CAAM's Deputy Director, Exhibitions and Programs, Naima J. Keith.



Visitors attend *In Conversation: Erin Christovale and Suné Woods* at Art + Practice's public program space.



Art + Practice's public program space at 4334 Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008.





## ***SPIRAL PLAY: LOVING IN THE '80S PUBLIC PROGRAMS***

### **ARTIST TALK: SHINIQUE SMITH**

Artist Shinique Smith discussed the role that fabric, clothing and objects play within her collaged paintings and bound sculptures. Smith delved into the psychology and motivations of Western consumption of fashion and what objects give Smith insight into her personal attachment to these materials and ideas.



### **IN CONVERSATION: ERIN CHRISTOVALE + SUNÉ WOODS**

Hammer Museum's Assistant Curator Erin Christovale summarized artist Al Loving's practice and use of the spiral as a symbol for life's continuity. Artist Suné Woods discussed her work in relation to Loving's use of the spiral and exploration with form, color and composition.



### **IN CONVERSATION: LEONARDO DREW + CHRISTOPHER BEDFORD**

Artist Leonardo Drew and The Baltimore Museum of Art's Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director Christopher Bedford explored Drew's abstract sculptural works in relation to the artist's play on the dystopic tension between order and chaos, and how those ideas relate to Loving's embrace of the spiral.





Visitors attend author talk and book signing with Dr. Kellie Jones and California African American Museum's Deputy Director for Exhibitions and Programs, Naima J. Keith. (Above)

Visitors in Art + Practice's public program space. (1)

Visitors attend an exhibition walkthrough with artist Ruben Ochoa and curator César García. (2)

Q&A during an Art + Practice public program. (3)

Art + Practice's Executive Director Allan DiCastro in the public program space. (4)



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# SAMPLED y SURVEYED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

## EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH: RUBEN OCHOA + CÉSAR GARCÍA

Artist Ruben Ochoa and The Mistake Room's Executive and Artistic Director César García led a walkthrough of SAMPLED y SURVEYED in Art + Practice's exhibition space. Ochoa and García explored a selection of the artist's early and more recent artworks, highlighting Ochoa's interest in space and his interrogations of the processes that bring it to being.



## ARTIST TALK: PATRICK MARTINEZ

Los Angeles-based artist Patrick Martinez presented a body of his artwork and examined the inspirations behind it. Martinez discussed how his experience of growing up in Los Angeles has informed his art making and how the city impacted him personally. He also discussed where his artistic practice is currently, and how he has evolved as an artist.



## ARTIST TALK: RODNEY MCMILLIAN

Artist Rodney McMillian, whose practice embodies a wide range of media and techniques, discussed how he manipulates materials, including those found in his everyday life, to create sculptural works, paintings, and videos that challenge the relationships among language, aesthetics and content. McMillian presented images from his recent exhibitions, including his work featured in the 2015 Sharjah Biennial and *Blues for Smoke*, an interdisciplinary exhibition organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA).



## IN CONVERSATION: ANALIA SABAN + SELENE PRECIADO

Artist Analia Saban and independent curator Selene Preciado discussed material and process in relation to current conceptual practices of a younger generation of artists such as Ruben Ochoa and Saban. The conversation addressed issues of materiality and present-day concerns in painting and sculpture. Saban and Preciado outlined moments in conceptualism that since the 1960s have continued to subvert traditional ideas of the functionality of specific mediums, such as the capacity of medium itself to convey meaning through its loaded histories.



## AUTHOR TALK + BOOK SIGNING OF SOUTH OF PICO: DR. KELLIE JONES + NAIMA J. KEITH

Organized in collaboration with the California African American Museum (CAAM), esteemed author, curator and Associate Professor in Art History and Archaeology and African American Studies at Columbia University, Dr. Kellie Jones discussed and signed her new book, *South of Pico* with CAAM's Deputy Director, Exhibitions and Programs, Naima J. Keith. In *South of Pico*, Dr. Jones explores how artists during the 1960s and 1970s in Los Angeles' black communities created a vibrant, productive, and engaged activist arts scene in the face of structural racism. With *South of Pico*, Dr. Jones expands the understanding of the histories of black arts and creativity in Los Angeles and beyond.

## ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM (CAAM)

The California African American Museum (CAAM) explores the art, history, and culture of African Americans. Chartered by the State of California in 1977, the museum began formal operations in 1981 and is a state supported agency and a Smithsonian affiliate. In addition to presenting exhibitions and public programs, CAAM houses a permanent collection of more than four thousand works of art, artifacts, and historical documents, and a publicly accessible research library containing more than twenty thousand volumes.

**THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN  
AMERICAN MUSEUM**  
600 State Drive, Los  
Angeles, CA 90037

[caamuseum.org](http://caamuseum.org)

Hours: Tuesday - Saturday:  
10 am - 5 pm, Sunday:  
11 am - 5 pm.



# THE MEANING OF ACCESS

Christine Y. Kim

Visitors gather on the Resnick North Lawn  
at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

*Art + Practice in conversation with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's  
Associate Curator, Contemporary Art, Christine Y. Kim.*



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Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Associate Curator, Contemporary Art, Christine Y. Kim in conversation with Art + Practice. (1)

Entrance to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, off 6th Street. (2)

Art catalogues and reference materials in Christine Y. Kim's office. (3)

#### *How do you define access?*

It is hard to define access without going into a host of ways in which access is understood and misunderstood, and how it is necessary to look at a much more complex, multi-dimensional matrix of what access is.

For me, access is best understood in connection with inclusion. You can hand out all the free passes you want and they alone will not bring people in. One must create a culture of inclusion, and a space where people feel respected, included, and invited.

*Within the context of a museum, is access considered in an institution's programming and organizational structure? If so, how?*

Yes, and at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) this is handled in a variety of ways. A recent New York Times article pointed out interesting statistics on board members, staff, and audience and the ways in which museums are not reflecting our communities as well as we could and should be. We can use their data, in addition to programming, to examine how we are fostering inclusivity and access.

As a person of color and as someone who thus far has spent most of my curatorial career at a culturally specific institution, The Studio Museum in Harlem (2000–2008), I find a diverse workplace to be enriching, comfortable, open, and a palpable and actual site for progress. A variety of voices, classes, and cultures brings perspectives to our selection of works of art on view or in the collection, exhibition catalogues, and teacher materials and inform us about what to look at, think about and exhibit, beyond what I was taught in school in the 1980s to be important—presidents, monuments, European painting and sculpture and, essentially, what is “classical” (read: “important” and “valid”).

Immigrant artists and curators are the purveyors and interlocutors of diverse American narratives, for example, as we have in the Pacific Standard Time (PST) exhibitions *A Universal History of Infamy and Home—So Different, So Appealing*. These are more interesting to me than the choices that might be made by the same mindsets that gave me presidents, monuments, and European painting and sculpture. Everyone's opinion counts, but the balance has been off for some time, not the county's population. With all that is happening in the world at the moment, leveling that playing field will ultimately enhance access, hopefully penetrating socio-economic hierarchies and considering what can be inverted, shifted, reorganized, or even thrown out!

*Do museums target certain audiences, and if so, what does the average museum visitor look like?*

Right now, not as diverse as we'd like, but that has changed a lot in the past decade. We have more work to do. We largely draw predominantly white college-educated populations and tourists, but we are increasingly engaging historically marginalized populations. Kids represent a big portion of our audience. One known way of reaching new audiences is through the younger generations and most of them are return visitors.

I have two young kids, and I perpetually observe them making friendships and learning new things at places where they are only there for a short time. They are open



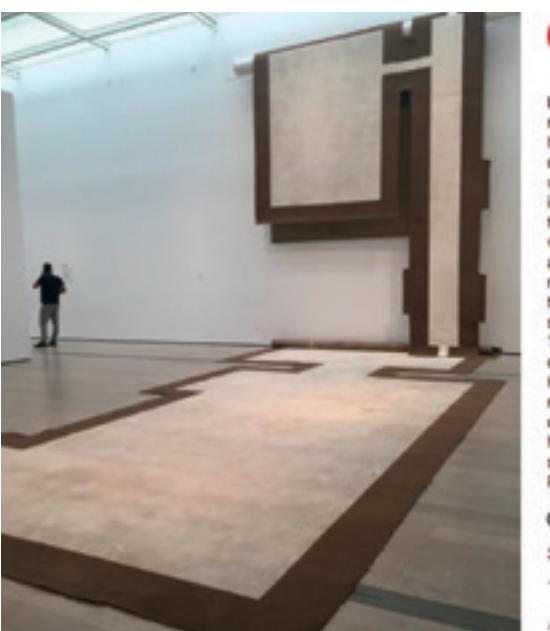
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lacma

lacma A few months ago I drove around my old neighborhood and passed by the house I grew up in, something I hadn't done in decades. I wondered what it would be like to revisit the house and go inside again, the last time I was inside that house was when I was 8 years old. I vividly remember the layout of the house and what it felt like in every room. I also remember the sunlight coming in through the windows specially in the summer. This carpet from Carmen Argote's childhood home —titled "720 Sq. Ft. Household Mutations - Part B" reminds me of that. Objects/material as time capsules and artifacts that hold so much history. A carpet that has so many stories embedded in it. Removed from its original context,



3,863 likes

JULY 11

Add a comment...

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Veterans Make Movies, Summer 2016. (1-2)

Target Free Holiday Mondays: President's Day, February 20, 2017. (3)

Instagram image from Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Instagram artist-in-residence Guadalupe Rosales of Carmen Argote's 720 Sq. Ft. Household Mutations, 2010. Courtesy of Carmen Argote. (4)

Local students attend the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Diana Thater: *The Sympathetic Imagination* exhibition, curated by Christine Y. Kim. (5)



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to climbing the jungle gym together with new and different kids. Likewise, they come to LACMA and befriend art, and the museum befriends them. Andell Family Sundays and the free youth membership program, NexGen, bring in swarms of kids on any given day. With NexGen, each kid can bring one adult for free. The result is that LACMA sees parents and caregivers who are first-time visitors.

*According to a new report issued by the American Alliance of Museums, 9% of the core museum visitors are minorities and approximately 20% of museum employees are minorities. If museums want to address these discrepancies, what are ways in which they can adapt the museum's existing structure to allow for more inclusion?*

The answer to this is complex. One area is to question what "minority" means. I try not to use that term unless I am speaking statistically. We are headed toward a minority-majority, and LA is, what, over 40 percent Latino/a? Let's say what we mean and mean what we say—people of color? Black and Latino/a audiences? Lower income? Immigrant populations? Marginalized populations, including LGBTQIA? First, we have to look at Boards of Trustees and staff, especially at the executive levels, and what missions, mandates, methodologies, and messaging we are putting out there, why, and what is relevant and to whom.

Second, it's important not to stick with on-campus admission numbers and demographics as our sole

metric. There are other ways and measures. We have to go out into the world, into our communities, ask people what they want and need and meet them there. We have been doing this for decades. One example is LACMA's robust community engagement in North Hollywood, East Los Angeles (Vincent Price Art Museum)/Monterey Park, Compton, etc., where thousands of people are getting a piece of LACMA when we meet them in their neighborhoods. So, while LACMA is still host to 1.5 million visitors on campus every year, we know that it's not just about getting a bus and bringing people here. It's about long-term, diverse partnerships based on people's interests, their communities, and their notions of art and culture, around the county.

Additionally, we need to think of diversity in multiple ways, not just race, culture, and class. My brother-in-law is a Gulf War veteran, and I'm sure you know veterans interested in reintegration as civilians and citizens, looking for creative ways to produce and share. *Veterans Make Movies* is a program that teaches them how to write scripts, use the camera, interview, and edit so that they can tell their own stories. As part of this program, former Black Panther and vet Rodney Barnette, whose daughter Sadie Barnette is a contemporary artist in Oakland, just interviewed Angela Davis for his new film. Art making is already everywhere. How do we galvanize it, work together, and support it? Last, we have to create new and alternative platforms and spaces for making, showing, and discussing art. We invite organizations like Las Fotos Project, which provides photography mentoring

to teen girls, to study works in the photo collection. Nan Goldin, Diane Arbus, Robert Frank, and others captured their own version of “America,” and this gets communicated to the teens and articulated in their own images. This year, we have our first Instagram artist in residence: Guadalupe Rosales, a young Los Angeles artist and archivist and founder of the digital archives @veteranas\_and\_rucas and @map-pointz. She has an ongoing project developing an archive of photographs, objects, and ephemera related to the ’90s Los Angeles Latinx party crew scene, and she recently used LACMA’s Instagram as a platform for her work.

This is what I mean when I say that we have to look at these issues and questions holistically, and develop multipronged and inclusive approaches with facilitators who can reflect different audiences’ experiences and interests. Where did these ideas for shows, projects, engagements come from? They came from creative, diverse staff members, kids, people in the community. So, it works when it’s on all sides.

*How is access considered within the context of a museum’s curatorial department?*

Today, over 62 percent of employees in cultural organizations identify as white.<sup>1</sup> I have been really fortunate to have worked with amazing and diverse curators throughout my career: at LACMA, Rita Gonzalez, Jennie King, and Franklin Sirmans (now at Perez Art Museum), and our newest team member, Jenny Cernada; and in New York City, with Thelma Golden, Lowery Sims, Thomas Lax, and Sandra Jackson. Working with diverse individuals and teams, inclusion is always on our minds in creating exhibitions and programs. Our conversations about artists in group shows, acquisition proposals, and interviewing prospective team members always involve reflections around perspective, culture, normativity, and marginalization. Also, it has to be a priority of the director, which I am glad to say is the case for Michael Govan. We may not agree on artists, shows, or methodologies, but we agree on the directions we need to be moving in and consistently discuss ways to get there.

I didn’t grow up knowing what a curator does. My parents were immigrants trying to put food on the table, navigate the public school system in Northern California, and start a business. I came to art history and curating in and after college. Programs here like the Mellon Undergraduate



Installation photography of the exhibition *Chinese Ceramics from The Los Angeles County Museum of Art at the Vincent Price Art Museum* (January 24, 2017 - July 22, 2017). (1)

View of installation in progress, *A Universal History of Infamy: Virtues of Disparity* at 18th Street Arts Center in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), 2017. (2)

<sup>1</sup> Pogrebin, Robin. “It’s a Diverse City, but Most Big Museum Boards Are Strikingly White.” *New York Times*, August 22, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/arts/design/new-york-museums-diversity-staff-boards.html>.



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Curatorial Fellowship identify young people of color and bring them to the museum as paid interns over the course of two years with support and guidance. They are such talented young people who, without this support, might have gone into other fields or veered away from nonprofit work.

*What is a curator’s role in promoting diversity within a museum’s planned exhibitions program?*

We generate the programming and content within our fields of expertise and must show others that our arguments are fair, smart, and worthy. Then, with the teams in Exhibitions and Development, we think carefully about space, resources, and programming. My next two shows are Isaac Julien and a full survey of work by Julie Mehretu. I’m in the middle of research on Contemporary Korean art and post-internet artists. Clearly, I have support to pursue diverse exhibition research and programming. When I first arrived I co-curated monographic exhibitions of work by James Turrell and Diana Thater, both artists I greatly admire. With time, experience,

and collaboration, I have been bringing a variety of viewpoints and practices to our exhibition programming.

*Do museums incorporate creative ideas and/or tools to tackle the intellectual and social barriers that might prevent people from taking advantage of a museum? If so, what creative ideas and/or tools can you think of?*

Jane Burrell and Sarah Jesse, my colleagues in Education, have headed up efforts to understand the diversity and desires of communities. An illustration is the work we are doing at Charles White Elementary School, renovating the entrance to make it more accessible and visible, using architecture and design not as an intellectual strategy, but as practical and real urban design, based on the community's needs and interests. Our colleagues work with us curators to understand and learn how to meet these needs and interests, whether they are about artwork in the collection, a specific site or monument, or programming.

*Do museums consider the “needs” of their local communities, and if so, does “access” play a role in addressing those needs?*

In order to understand inclusion and identify interests and needs, we have to meet diverse audiences where they might be and consider the politics of participation. Take something like a survey, one way we try to understand a population's needs and demographics, is perhaps to create greater access. But what if you don't have a mobile device? What if you don't use a computer? What if you don't participate for fear that your undocumented status might be revealed? We all want to create greater access at cultural and educational institutions, but who is determining what that content is and why? Who benefits from what, how and why? Whose voice, time, and effort is at stake? In our work with communities, LACMA's diverse staff reaches out and talks to people on the ground, of all ages, backgrounds, colors, and experiences.

*Do any museums in Los Angeles align their visions of accessibility, and if so, how?*

The cultural landscape keeps growing and shifting: The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (formerly the Santa Monica Museum of Art) just reopened, the Marciano Museum is new, a Korean-American Museum is opening in a couple of years, the Lucas Museum for Narrative Art in Expo Park, and Art + Practice, along with The Mistake Room and The Underground Museum are relatively new. This is good for LA. With art, more is more. I'm now working on collaborations with Art + Practice with concurrent Isaac Julien presentations in 2019 and also with CAAM. We collaborate regularly with 18th Street Arts Center, the Getty Museum, and Vincent Price Art Museum, in addition to Charles White Elementary School and other spaces. It works best when we think about different scales, geographies, and symbiosis—what each of us needs and the other has or knows how to do, and where relationships exist and can be expanded, especially when we have different scales, scopes, geographies, and audiences.

#### ABOUT LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (LACMA)

Since its inception in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography, mirroring Los Angeles's rich cultural heritage and uniquely diverse population. Today LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection of over 135,000 objects that illuminate 6,000 years of art history from new and unexpected points of view. A museum of international stature as well as a vital cultural center for Southern California, LACMA shares its vast collection with the Greater Los Angeles County and beyond through exhibitions, public programs, and research facilities that attract over 1.5 million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions more through community partnerships, school outreach programs, and creative digital initiatives. LACMA's main campus is located halfway between the ocean and downtown, adjacent to the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the future home of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Dedicated to serving all of Los Angeles, LACMA collaborates with a range of curators, educators, and artists on exhibitions and programs at various sites throughout the County.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (LACMA)  
5905 Wilshire Boulevard,  
Los Angeles, CA 90036

lacma.org

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday:  
11 am - 5 pm; Friday: 11 am -  
8 pm; Saturday - Sunday: 10 am -  
7 pm.



# RUBEN OCHOA: *SAMPLED y SURVEYED*

César García

Translation by Xel-Ha López Méndez

*SAMPLED y SURVEYED was organized by  
Art + Practice and curated by César García,  
Executive and Artistic Director of The Mistake  
Room with generous support from Susanne  
Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects.*

# RUBEN OCHOA

## *SAMPLED y SURVEYED*

Walking on a sidewalk could be a pretty ordinary experience. Trips to the park with friends, on foot, are remembered by the stories exchanged en route, while walks to work, often rushed, are consumed by thoughts of tasks ahead and quickly forgotten. Even casual strolls around a familiar block become uneventful over time. Seldom do we stop to consider the sidewalk itself unless forced to—maybe through a crack we have to maneuver to avoid or perhaps through a missing chunk that demands we adjust our path. For the most part, the sidewalk is a given—a thing we stand on and move through.

Those cracks and missing chunks that make some aware of the ground beneath them are not so extraordinary for others. For those who live in places where sidewalks are rarely cared for, the crumbling concrete, similar to the one captured by Ruben Ochoa's early photographs, is part of their day-to-day environment. For them, fixing that sidewalk is what would rupture the status quo and perhaps lead people to look down closely at the ground below them. Thus, these cement trails are in fact not a given for everyone. They are not—like all other material and immaterial spaces—neutral objects, but rather socially constructed ones.

For the past decade, Oceanside-born, Los Angeles-based artist Ruben Ochoa has engaged the complexities of this truth. For Ochoa, space is the product of specific and intentioned acts, and the often-invisible processes of its making reveal deep inequalities that condition the way people live in the world. *SAMPLED y SURVEYED* proposes a new reading of Ochoa's oeuvre that considers his works as dynamic spatial forms assembled through construction techniques that

*Para la gente caminar por la acera puede ser una experiencia bastante ordinaria. Idas al parque, a pie, con amigos, son recordadas por las historias que intercambiamos en la ruta, mientras las caminatas hacia el trabajo, a veces a prisa, se llenan de pensamientos y tareas pendientes rápidamente olvidadas. Incluso los paseos sobre una calle conocida se vuelven banales con el tiempo. En muy pocas ocasiones nos detenemos a considerar la acera nada más, a menos que ésta nos obligue—talvez desde una grieta que nos haga maniobrar para evitarla, o quizá, desde un trozo perdido de concreto que nos pida corregir nuestro camino. Aunque en su mayor parte, la acera sea algo que se da por hecho—una cosa sobre la que nos detenemos y a través de la cual nos desplazamos.*

*Esas grietas y pedazos perdidos que hacen darnos cuenta de la tierra que se encuentra debajo, para otros no son nada extraordinario. Para aquellos que viven en sitios donde las aceras raramente son una preocupación, las fracturas del concreto—similares a las que aparecen en las fotografías de Ruben Ochoa—son ya parte del entorno. Para ellos, nivelar esa acera es lo que podría romper el status quo y, quizá, provocar que la gente mire hacia abajo, de cerca, el suelo sobre el que se encuentra. De modo que este recorrido pavimentado no es precisamente un hecho para todos. Las aceras son, como otros espacios materiales e inmateriales, objetos no neutrales, sino más bien espacios socialmente construidos.*

*Por casi una década, nacido en Oceanside y radicado en Los Ángeles, el artista Ruben Ochoa ha ido relacionándose con las complejidades de este hecho. Para Ruben el espacio es producto de intenciones y actos específicos y los casi invisibles procesos por los cuales se produce revelan desigualdades que condicionan la forma en que viven las personas al*



Installation view. Ruben Ochoa, *Economías Apiladas/Stacked Economies*, 2017. OSB and pallets. 107 x 92 x 45 1/2 inches.



SAMPLED y SURVEYED. Installation views, Art + Practice, Los Angeles, CA, September 9, 2017 - January 27, 2018.



structure and choreograph the ways bodies move in space. Most of the works in the exhibition are produced with materials that commonly make up the built environment and explore how concrete, wood, and steel can function like charged cultural signs when treated with gestures of formal and conceptual abstraction.

*SAMPLED* y *SURVEYED* is organized in two parts that parallel the logic of many of Ochoa's artworks. The first room—a constellation of sculptural moments—transforms Art + Practice's (A+P) main gallery into an environment forged through methods of obstruction, reinforcement, extraction, and framing. The second part, presented in A+P's adjoining gallery, reveals the ways materials function in Ochoa's work and give viewers intimate insights into the artist's experimentation and abstraction exercises that are translated into his more monumental pieces. The relationship between what one sees and the lesser-seen underpinnings is key to understanding Ochoa's practice and served as an inspiration for the structure of the exhibition.

#### MATTER, BODIES, AND THE SCULPTURAL MOMENT

The series of large-scale works that occupy A+P's main space do more than just respond to site. Their placement and the method of their making speak to specific acts that assemble built environments and the way these gestures prescribe the ways bodies navigate them. For Ochoa, the histories of minimalism and land art have been influential in the development of his practice, and this exhibition strives to shed light on these less considered sensibilities. Usually contextualized through their materials or scale, Ochoa's artworks function in



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rededor del mundo. *SAMPLED* y *SURVEYED* propone una nueva lectura de la obra de Ochoa enfocada en su trabajo como un dinamismo del espacio y las formas, ensambladas mediante técnicas de construcción que estructuran y coreografian la manera en que los cuerpos se mueven en el espacio. La obra en esta exposición es producida con materiales que comúnmente recubren las construcciones e investigan como el concreto, la madera y el acero en la práctica de Ochoa se transforman en un lenguaje cargado de símbolos culturales.

*SAMPLED* y *SURVEYED* está organizada en dos partes que igualan la lógica de muchos de los trabajos de Ochoa. La primera—una constelación a gran escala de momentos escultóricos—que transforma la principal galería de Art + Practice (A+P) en un ambiente forjado mediante técnicas de obstrucción y reforzamiento, enmarcado y extracción. La segunda parte, presentada en la pequeña segunda galería de A+P, muestra la manera en que los materiales que usa Ochoa funcionan—revelando a los espectadores una perspectiva más cercana a los ejercicios de abstracción del artista que después son trasladados a sus piezas más monumentales. Esta relación entre lo que uno observa y los cimientos apenas mirados, es la clave para entender la práctica de Ruben y sirve como inspiración para comprender la estructura de la exhibición como un todo.

#### MATERIA, CUERPO Y EL MOMENTO ESCULTÓRICO

La serie de obras de gran formato que ocupa la galería principal de A+P hacen mas que responder al espacio de la galería. El método de su composición y su colocación hablan de la manera en la cual actos y gestos específicos construyen formas y a su vez, prescribe también el modo en que los cuerpos se mueven entre éstas. Para Ochoa, la historia del arte minimalista y el land art han sido influencias decisivas en el desarrollo de su práctica y esta exposición enfoca estas influencias. Generalmente contextualizados por sus materiales o escala, en esta exposición las obras funcionan más bien como construcciones minimalistas que forjan intersecciones entre cuerpo y espacio. Como los tempranos objetos escultóricos de Simone Forti, que dan paso a una

Ruben Ochoa, *Overlapped in the 90063*, 2007. C-print in custom Wenge frame. 43 x 53 x 3 1/4 inches. (1)

Ruben Ochoa, *Kissed in the 90011*, 2007. C-print in custom Wenge frame, 43 x 54 x 3 1/4 inches. (2)

Ruben Ochoa, *Still Tripping*, 90033, 2007. C-print in custom Wenge frame. 43 x 53 x 3 1/4 inches. (3)

All images above courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photos by Robert Wedemeyer.



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this show more like early minimalist constructs that forge intersections between the body and space. Like Simone Forti's early sculptural objects that gave way to situational choreographies, Ochoa's spatial interventions elicit movement or stillness from viewers as a way to reveal how different spaces are assembled to condition how we navigate the world.

*Economías Apiladas* (2017), one of the first artworks viewers encounter in the show, mobilizes obstruction tactics by manifesting what appears to be at first glance a seamless freestanding wall. Its proximity to the entrance intentionally dictates the way visitors navigate the exhibition space. As viewers approach, it becomes evident the permanence evoked by the façade is not as it may seem. A stack of wood pallets buttresses the thinly paneled surface, gesturing to the invisible labor that is integral to both formal and informal economies.

Ochoa also uses techniques of reinforcement to both limit and encourage movement. Viewers encounter *If I had a rebar for every time someone tried to mold me* (2007/2017)—una elegante composición reticular de varillas de acero que abarca completamente el espacio, evitando la entrada de cualquiera. Incapaces de acceder, los espectadores sólo pueden observar la obra desde afuera, como una imagen—eco de la forma en que estamos obligados a relacionarnos con estructuras pensadas para reforzar una división o un umbral que no tiene la intención de ser transgredido. Sin embargo, el refuerzo también puede tener una función distinta: propiciar el movimiento a través de un espacio destinándolo a unificar en vez de separar.

*Horizon Line* (2017) consists of concrete and dirt that resembles a cross-section of the very ground we stand



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serie de coreografías situacionistas, en esta exhibición el trabajo de Ochoa induce el movimiento o la quietud de los espectadores como una manera de revelar cómo los diferentes espacios se encuentran enlazados a la condiciones bajo las cuales existimos.

"Stacked Economies" (2017), una de las primeras obras que los visitantes encuentran, moviliza las tácticas de obstrucción, manifestado lo que a primera vista parece ser una pared lisa sostenida por sí misma. Lo monumental de la obra es abrumador y dicta la manera en que los visitantes entran a la exhibición. A medida que estos la rodean para entrar al resto de los espacios, se vuelve evidente que la estabilidad evocada por esta fachada no es tal como parece. Una serie de tarimas de madera unidas, apiladas, apoyadas al muro—dando referencia al trabajo invisible que sostiene a economías formales e informales.

Ochoa también utiliza técnicas de refuerzo para limitar e inducir el movimiento. Entrando a la galería los visitantes se encuentran con "If I had a rebar for every time someone tried to mold me" (2007/2017)—una elegante composición reticular de varillas de acero que abarca completamente el espacio, evitando la entrada de cualquiera. Incapaces de acceder, los espectadores sólo pueden observar la obra desde afuera, como una imagen—eco de la forma en que estamos obligados a relacionarnos con estructuras pensadas para reforzar una división o un umbral que no tiene la intención de ser transgredido. Sin embargo, el refuerzo también puede tener una función distinta: propiciar el movimiento a través de un espacio destinándolo a unificar en vez de separar.

"Horizon Line" (2017) es un trabajo hecho de concreto y tierra que asemeja un pedazo de piso extraído de un lugar



Installation view. Ruben Ochoa, *Wallpaper with the Sounds of its Own Removal*, 2008. Solvent inkjet on vinyl wallpaper, spray paint, acrylic, wall paper paste, concrete remnants, fence posts, steel cables and 55 minutes looped audio. 180 x 340 inches.

on removed from an unknown location. Stretching across the wall like a pristine line, viewers are encouraged to move through the space to see the artwork in its totality. The gesture of reinforcement evokes flow and the necessity to move in order to see a whole; a poetic reference to the channels that sustain exchanges amongst peoples and perhaps even nations.

Extraction methods in Ochoa's spatial environment encourage other types of movement. *Get off me...I'm not on you!* (2009-2017), encompasses a floor piece made from concrete, rebar, and dirt that mimics the act of cutting and lifting entire sections of the gallery floor to expose the foundation below. The iteration of the artwork presented in this exhibition is a stand-alone piece and not an actual floor extraction as in previous renditions. Three concrete slabs hover precariously on rebar. Viewers are not only forced to move around it but are enticed to bend down, look beneath, and explore the mechanics of how the extraction happened. The inquisitive choreography in many ways recalls the aftermath of other acts of removal or extraction when people are left to wonder how something was taken or displaced. The encounter with the void left behind encapsulates other histories of absence and is a powerful reminder of local questions of urban development and gentrification.

Tactics of framing grapple with the void in Ochoa's constellation of sculptural moments. A series of freestanding totem-like steel works reference bodies in stillness. Their function is dual. Not only are they gesturing to a corporeal presence, they are framing a negative space whose shape references a missing body. The steel shapes the hollow edges of the interior inviting viewers to almost traverse into a space of confinement forged specifically for a human form.

This archipelago of encounters between space and matter interrogates the inequities that shape what geographer Edward Soja once called "the spatiality of human life." In

desconocido. Expandiéndose a través del muro como una línea prística, esta pieza anima al espectador a recorrer el espacio para explorarla en su totalidad. A medida que los cuerpos se mueven junto a ella, el gesto de reforzamiento recuerda la multiplicidad de puertas y canales abiertos que sostienen los intercambios entre los pueblos y quizás más ampliamente, entre las naciones.

Los métodos de extracción dan origen a otros tipos de movimiento en la concepción espacial de Ochoa. "Get off me...I'm not on you!" (2009-2017) se compone de una pieza a gran escala sobre el suelo, hecha de concreto, varillas de acero y tierra, que imita el acto de cortar y levantar partes enteras del piso de la galería para exponer aquello que se encuentra en la base. Aunque la reiteración de la obra en esta exposición es una pieza independiente y no una extracción real del piso de la galería, el acto de remover provoca un movimiento particular en los espectadores. Tres pedazos de cemento levantados y apoyados sobre varillas como piernas. Los visitantes no están obligados a moverse al rededor de la pieza para verla y de cualquier manera se sienten atraídos a agacharse y mirar debajo de las losas y tratar de explicarse como pudieron haberlo sustraído. La interrogante coreografía que la pieza provoca, de alguna forma recuerda las secuelas de otros actos de extracción o remoción cuando la gente se detiene a preguntarse cómo algo fue sustraído o desplazado. El encuentro con el vacío que deja algo que ha sido retirado, encapsula otras historias sobre la ausencia y es un poderoso recordatorio de los asuntos locales del desarrollo urbano.

Las tácticas de enmarcado en la constelación de momentos escultóricos de Ochoa también se enfrentan al vacío. Una serie de estructuras autónomas de acero en forma de tótem hacen referencia a cuerpos en quietud. Sin embargo, su función es dual. No sólo asemejan una presencia corporal, sino que también enmarcan un espacio negativo cuya forma sugiere la ausencia de un cuerpo. El acero moldea los bordes del interior hueco de la obra y al hacerlo invita a los espectadores a casi atravesar un espacio de confinamiento, construido específicamente para una forma humana.



Ruben Ochoa, *Sometimes walls occur*, 2009. Cement on paper, 41 x 65 x 3 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo courtesy of Charles H. Scott Gallery at Emily Carr University. Photo by Scott Massey.



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presenting the works with this intent, a performative dimension is evoked and formal histories take on a more poetic role in the tackling of charged sociopolitical contexts.

### FLAT Y SCULPTURAL

The materials Ochoa uses to create his works are more than structural elements. Materials have histories forged by their making, their circulation, and the way they are encountered and used. Ochoa is deeply conscious of this and through formal and conceptual abstraction transforms them into charged cultural signifiers that tackle questions of race and class differences crucial to the history of marginalized peoples. In doing this Ochoa also expands how these materials function in his larger sculptural compositions.

The second section of this exhibition highlights the way Ochoa assembles his charged material lexicon. In this focused presentation, a series of works on paper capture layers of paint and rust arranged in abstract compositions that are both lively and exhausted. Narratives of decay are accentuated with color and made visceral through textured surfaces. A large-scale two-dimensional work made by troweling a thin layer of cement on paper gives the material a pictorial function, allowing it to exist as an image that evokes the urban fabric. In a similar way an abstract

Ruben Ochoa, *Redrum*, 2013. Acrylic on raw linen. 48 x 36 inches. Collection of Dori and Charles Mostov. Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer. (1)

*El archipiélago de momentos escultóricos en esta sección de la exposición, cuestiona las desigualdades que configuran lo que Edward Soja llamó la espacialidad de la vida humana. Al presentar las obras con esta intención, se evoca una dimensión performativa y las historias formales del arte conceptual, de gran importancia para Ochoa, asumen un rol más poético en la resolución del contenido sociopolítico.*

### PLANO Y ESCULTURAL

*Los materiales que Ochoa utiliza para crear sus obras a gran escala no son sólo elementos estructurales, sino que cargan significantes culturales que hablan de las desigualdades inherentes en la composición de los espacios habitados y atravesados por pueblos históricamente marginados. Ochoa entiende la importancia del uso de estos materiales y los abstrae para expandir su función y su significado.*

*La segunda parte de esta exposición reúne una concreta selección de obras que ilustran cómo Ochoa logra la creación de este cargado léxico material. Aquí, una serie de trabajos en papel, captura capas de pintura y óxido dispuestos en composiciones abstractas que son a la vez vívidas y extenuantes. Narrativas de la decadencia se acentúan con el color y se hacen viscerales a través de superficies con textura. Una obra minimalista a gran escala realizada mediante una fina capa de cemento vertida sobre papel, y una especie de paisaje compuesto con*

Ruben Ochoa, *Incredulity*, 2013. Acrylic on raw linen. 48 x 36 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer. (2)



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composition of concrete remnants on the back of draping vinyl wallpaper evokes the freeway wall intervention it once was, while reimagining the formal qualities of a landscape. Rebar impressions made of rust and graphite make the visual relationships between content and form clearer here, while a sculpture of wood pallets, held up by rebar, destabilizes the conventional function of these forms in ways that allow us to think about other meanings for them.

In short, what Ochoa does by transforming these things into images and symbols is create his own version of what French historian Pierre Norra termed *lieux de mémoire*—loci of memory. Matter becomes a reservoir of memories ready to be animated by viewers. Concrete, wood, and steel are allowed to mean different things to those who encounter them. For some, the forms summon recollections of the crumbling buildings they grew up in, and, for others, the costs of their last home renovation. This generous way of experiencing the work allows us to define and tackle the political in our own way. For Ochoa, this subtle act is key in order for the poetic to be in synchronicity with charged interrogations of difference. This symbiosis not only reframes how we think about formal qualities of sculpture, but more broadly how we work through a history of art-making yet to be resolved.

*remanentes de concreto en la parte posterior de la cubierta de un papel tapiz, dan al material una función pictórica— permitiendo que exista como una imagen que evoca ciertos aspectos de la vida urbana. Una serie de rocas entre piezas de acero hechas con óxido y otros materiales, hacen que la relación visual entre el contenido y la forma sea más clara, mientras que una obra escultórica de tarimas de madera, sostenidas por varillas de hierro como patas, desestabiliza la función convencional de estas formas de modo que nos permite pensar en otros significados.*

*En resumen, lo que Ochoa hace a través de estos ejercicios materiales es transformar los elementos en imágenes y símbolos; creando su propia versión de lo que el historiador francés Pierre Norra llama lieux de mémoire (lugar de la memoria). La materia se convierte en acervo de recuerdos que son animados por los espectadores y sus propias perspectivas. Concreto, madera y acero significan diferentes cosas para diferentes espectadores. Para algunos les recuerda de el lugar en el que crecieron. A otros les recuerda del costo de la última remodelación de su casa. Esta manera generosa de poder leer la obra de Ochoa deja que los espectadores definan lo político como quieran. Para Ochoa esto es importante para que lo poético en su obras pueda conversar con temas complejos y a si mismo negociar una historia del arte conceptual que no se ha resuelto.*

## RUBEN OCHOA BIOGRAPHY

Born in Oceanside, CA, in 1974, Ruben Ochoa's practice engages space as both a concept and a material. Often produced with material forms associated with construction, Ochoa's works expose the ideological and broader sociopolitical and economic relationships that facilitate how the spaces we inhabit were assembled and how we move through them. His work has been the subject of various solo exhibitions, most recently, *Watching Waiting, Commiserating*, MCA San Diego, CA (2016); *MATRIX 169: Cloudless Day*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT (2014); *Cores and Cutouts*, Locust Projects, Miami, FL (2011); *Building on the Fringes of Tomorrow*, MCA San Diego, CA (2010); and *Crooked Under the Weight*, Site Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM (2009) amongst others.

Ochoa's work has also been included in a host of group exhibitions at various institutions including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; the MCA Detroit,

MI; the Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; the Perez Art Museum, Miami, FL; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; LACMA, Los Angeles, CA; the Menil Collection, Houston, TX; MOCA LA; and the Whitney Museum, New York, amongst others. Ochoa has also completed various public art projects, most notably, *Fwy Wall Extraction* (2006-2007) and *CLASS: C* (2001-2005). His work is found in museum collections across the US. He is the recipient of numerous awards including a California Community Foundation Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

He received his BFA from Otis College of Art and Design and his MFA from UC Irvine. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Installation view. Ruben Ochoa, *One day it's fine and next it's black*, 2017. Steel. 42 1/2 x 29 x 24 inches, 75 x 25 x 24 inches, 63 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 16 1/2 inches. (1)

Artist Ruben Ochoa. Photo by Allison Smith. (2)

Materials used in the exhibition *SAMPLED y SURVEYED*. (3)



# APPLYING IDEAS IN PRACTICE

As told by artist and Art + Practice Co-Founder Mark Bradford

In late 2016, I was chosen to represent the United States for the 57th Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy. I knew that I was going to create new artworks for the Pavilion, but I also wanted to engage with a site-specific project. What I mean by “site-specific” is that I wanted to invest my time and energies into a project that was socially embedded—a collaboration between myself and a locally based nonprofit. I sought to establish longevity.

Through compiling research about Italy and while working within the local Venetian community, I was pointed in the direction of a nonprofit social cooperative called Rio Terà dei Pensieri Cooperativa Sociale (RTdP)—a prison-based nonprofit supporting its local prison population through job training and providing opportunities of employment. I asked RTdP’s President and Director Liri Longo if the nonprofit would collaborate with me. Longo agreed. The collaboration began in November 2016.

For this exhibition in Italy, I wanted to stress my move away from collaborating with arts organizations. I was interested in engaging with a social service nonprofit that had a high capacity for collaboration. To me, this meant that the nonprofit’s administrators, specifically Longo, expressed an interest in working with me and had some ideas of how we might be able to collaborate. RTdP embodied these traits.

Before further describing RTdP and the collaboration, I should mention that this was not the first socially embedded and engaged project on which I had worked. I have worked with organizations locally (Art + Practice), and in New Orleans (L9 Center for the Arts), Chicago (Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, with local schools), across the Mexican border (Maleteros), and

Artist and Art + Practice’s Co-Founder Mark Bradford in the produce garden at the women’s prison in Venice, Italy.

elsewhere. Over time, I have learned that I most enjoy working with grassroots organizations. These types of organizations remind me of merchants. I have a history of being a merchant, specifically a hairdresser, and I feel I can relate.

As I work with these grassroots organizations, I am constantly thinking about how to update, shift and improve upon the mission of the collaboration. I like to rely on my 'toolbox'—a metaphorical process in which I simplify my ideas and strip their essence down to their roots.

At Art + Practice this simplification manifests itself in two words: need and access. We support our local foster youths' needs and provide the local community with access to museum-curated contemporary art. It's not complicated, but the result is powerful and makes an impact.

Furthermore, in collaborating with social service providers, I have found that I rely on my toolbox the most. I always begin a collaboration by asking what the nonprofit and its targeted population need most. I then assess what I can share and proceed from there.



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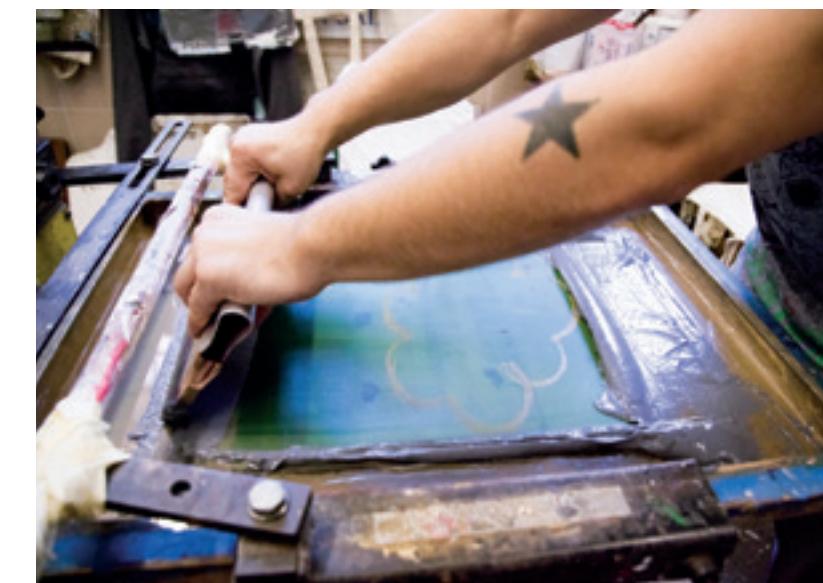
For RTdP, I first looked at the prison population. I quickly learned that people in prisons are trying to integrate back into society. I thought about how I could use my connections (to funds, PR, art world relationships, education, etc.) to help support this population. I found that by providing RTdP with grant support and by using the Biennale's platform, I could draw awareness to RTdP, exposing their mission to a wider audience—hence connecting the prison population with opportunities of employment and reciprocal connections with the local community.

RTdP was founded over twenty years ago in the men's prison in Venice, Italy. It modeled itself in a collective of nonprofit social cooperatives (13 of them) based throughout Italy called FREEDHOME.

RTdP has two programming sites within the men's and women's prisons. At the men's prison, RTdP programs silkscreen and bag manufacturing labs. At the women's prison, RTdP oversees a produce garden and an adjoining cosmetics lab. The nonprofit used to sell its products at a local kiosk until we established our collaboration, called *Process Collettivo*. Now, the nonprofit has its own storefront in Venice's city center. *Process*



3

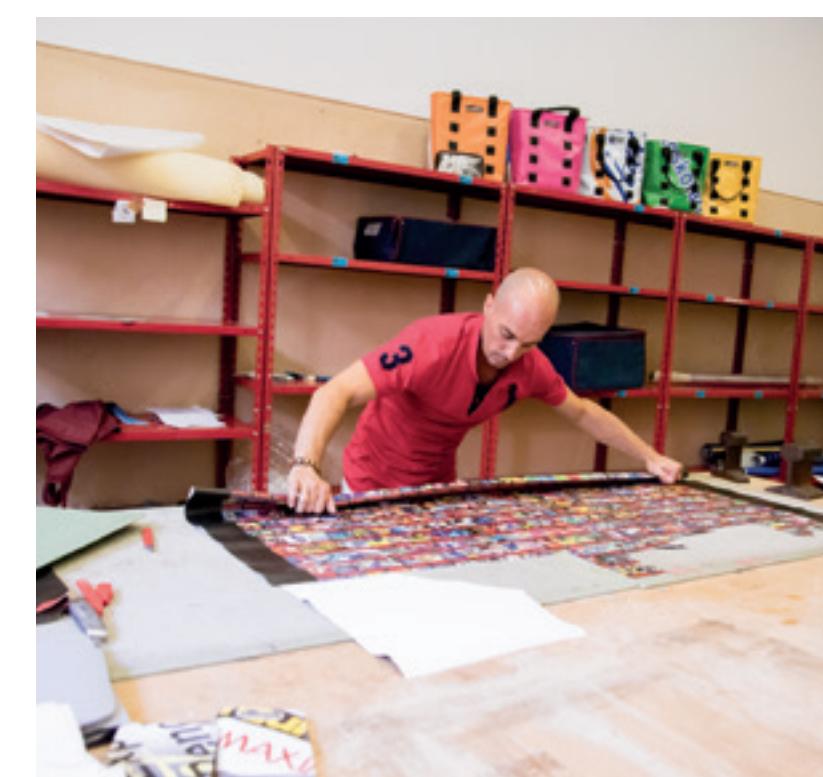


4

*Collettivo* is a half-English and half-Italian phrase. It does not make a lot of literal sense, but it reflects the mission of my collaboration with RTdP as a verb in action. Together, RTdP and I are working to support the needs of Venice's prison population while using the Biennale to draw access to our shared mission. The collaboration will continue on past the Biennale's exhibition period.

For the first year, we built a brick and mortar building for RTdP, near the Frari Church. RTdP is learning what it is like to be a merchant within the city of Venice, Italy. Its members are learning new entrepreneurial skills, selling their cosmetic products and merchandise, including t-shirts and bags made from recycled materials. We are now examining the first year's activities, analyzing what we have learned, and determining the initiatives for the remainder of the collaboration. We continue to stay flexible, build from the existing structure and adjust as we move forward.

As I look back on what I have learned from A+P and RTdP, I recognize that flexibility is



5

Rio Terà dei Pensieri's street view, outside the men's prison (1)

A RTdP employee silkscreens at the men's prison. (3-4)

Exterior view of the women's prison. (2)

A RTdP employee manufactures bags at the men's prison. (5)

key. You have to be willing to back up, reassess and rewrite your goal. I also recognize that there is a certain amount of fluidity present in collaborations. You cannot be too fixed because populations' needs change and you have to adapt if you are to service them effectively.

In working with a collaborator, I have come to realize that the relationship is very different than if I were to work by myself and in direct contact with the targeted population. When working with nonprofits, as in any personal relationship, the vision is not singular. It's plural. The other side of the collaboration will share things with you that sometimes, quite frankly, you had never considered. I have listened to my collaborators and have learned a lot as a result. I let the professionals do their job, recognize where my skills and constraints are, rely on my intuition and allow the collaboration to take shape naturally.



Workers look out onto the produce garden from the laundry room at the women's prison.



RTdP's employees working in the cosmetics lab at the women's prison.



## RIO TERÀ DEI PENSIERI COOPERATIVA SOCIALE

Rio Terà dei Pensieri Cooperativa Sociale (RTdP) provides opportunities for work placement and social reintegration to men and women within Venice's prison system. RTdP trains prisoners to produce cosmetics, design and manufacture PVC bags, and operate a silkscreen laboratory. All products are available to the public for purchase.

RTdP is part of FREEDHOME, a thirteen-member collective of nonprofit social cooperatives working with incarcerated persons in the Italian prison system. This collective provides a network of employment opportunities to current and formerly incarcerated persons. Participants are trained to make artisanal and food products, such as bags and baked goods, building vocational skills for future job opportunities outside of the collective network.

**RIO TERÀ DEI PENSIERI COOPERATIVA SOCIALE**  
San Polo 2995/A, Fondamente di Frari, 30125  
Venice, Italy | Hours: 10 am – 8 pm  
[rioteradeipensieri.org](http://rioteradeipensieri.org)

Excerpted from the brochure for Mark Bradford's presentation for the US Pavilion, at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

RTdP's staff with Mark Bradford and Mark Bradford Studio's Assistant Agata Gravante.

## PROCESS COLLETTIVO

Through a collaboration (2016 - 2022) called *Process Collettivo*, Rio Terà dei Pensieri (RTdP) and Mark Bradford are working to bring awareness to both the penal system and the success of the social cooperative model. Their efforts have established and are providing programming for a new resource center and storefront in Venice. RTdP and Bradford are working together to improve the lives of the participants the center serves, reshaping the negative perceptions surrounding incarcerated people.

Bradford's work with RTdP, as part of his involvement in the 2017 Venice Biennale, reflects his values as much as the artwork produced for the Biennale. The collaboration speaks to the artist's own story, told in his own voice, as embodied by the words, *need* and *access*.

Excerpted from the brochure for Mark Bradford's presentation for the US Pavilion, at the 2017 Venice Biennale.



*Process Collettivo* - Project Brochure.



*Process Collettivo*: Shop and Resource Center, Venice, Italy.

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### THE ROSE ART MUSEUM, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

415 South Street, Waltham, MA 02453 | [brandeis.edu/rose](http://brandeis.edu/rose)

## 2017 EXHIBITION INFORMATION

### FRED EVERSLY: BLACK, WHITE, GRAY

November 12, 2016 - January 28, 2017

Organized by Kim Conaty, Curator of the Rose Art Museum.

### SPIRAL PLAY: LOVING IN THE '80S

April 22 - July 29, 2017

Organized by Christopher Bedford, the Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of The Baltimore Museum of Art, and Katy Siegel, the Thaw Endowed Chair at Stony Brook University and Senior Curator at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

### RUBEN OCHOA: SAMPLED y SURVEYED

September 9, 2017 - January 27, 2018

Organized by Art + Practice and guest curated by César García, Executive and Artistic Director of The Mistake Room, with generous support from Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects.

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### PRINTING

Typecraft

### DESIGN AND LAYOUT

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*Back and Inside Back Cover: Courtesy of Brockman Gallery Archives; Page 01: Josiah Green; Page 07: Josiah Green (2); Page 09: Josiah Green; Page 11: Josiah Green (3-4); Pages 12-13: Josiah Green and Natalie Hon; Pages 14-23: Josiah Green; Pages 26-33: Courtesy of the Estate of Al Loving and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York; Page 34-37: Courtesy of the Estate of Al Loving and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York. Photos by Joshua White/JWPictures.com.; Pages 38-40: Courtesy of Mrs. Earnestine Brimberry; Page 41: Josiah Green; Pages 42-43: Josiah Green and Natalie Hon; Pages 46-47: Josiah Green; Pages 50-51: Josiah Green; Page 53: Josiah Green (2); Page 59: Josiah Green; Page 61: Josiah Green (Drew + Bedford); Page 63: Photo courtesy of Maria Hall-Brown (4); Page 64: Josiah Green (Saban + Preciado); Page 65: Josiah Green (Martinez); Page 70: Courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1-2); Photo © Museum Associates/Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Photo by Shawn Harris Ahmed (3); Courtesy of Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Carmen Argote (4); Page 71: Courtesy of Christine Y. Kim (5); Page 72: Photo © Museum Associates/Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Photo by Brant Brogan (1); Pages 72-73: Photo by Rocky Avalos (2); Page 75: zz; Pages 79-81: Joshua White/JWPictures.com; Pages 82-83: Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photos by Robert Wedemeyer; Pages 84-85: Joshua White/JWPictures.com; Page 86: Courtesy of Charles H. Scott Gallery at Emily Carr University, the artist, and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo by Scott Massey; Page 87: Collection of Dori and Charles Mostov. Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer (1); Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo by Robert Wedemeyer (2); Page 88: Joshua White/JWPictures.com; Page 89: Photo by Allison Smith (2); Pages 90-95: Courtesy of The Mark Bradford Studio. Photos by Agata Gravante; and Pages 96-99: Courtesy of Rio Terà dei Pensieri. Photos by Paolo Saglia.*

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