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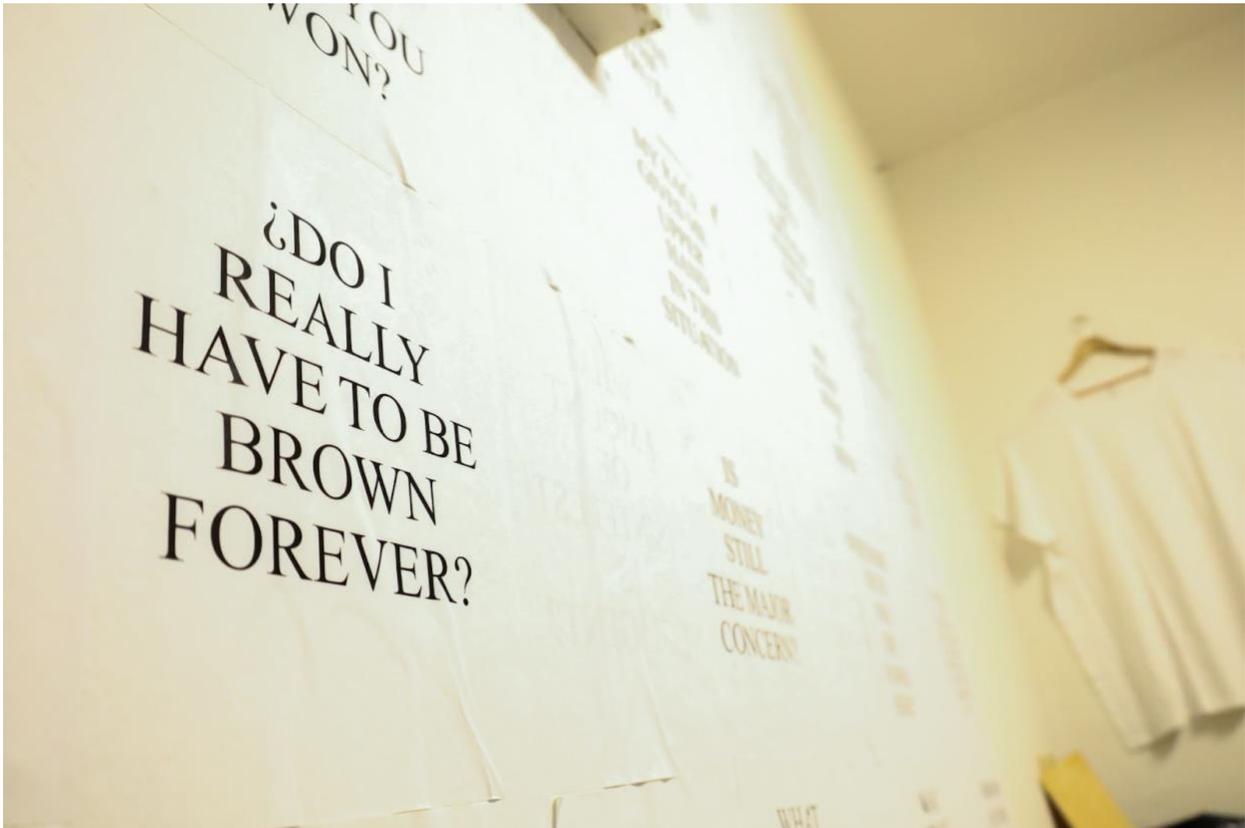
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Luis Rivera Jimenez, prototype for "Phatic Function #2," 2023. Laserjet printed paper, glue, water, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and CALA Alliance. Photograph by Shaunté Glover.

ASU ART MUSEUM PRESENTS 'LUIS RIVERA JIMENEZ: A BRIEF PROPOSAL ON RACE AND CULTURAL COSPLAY'

Tempe, AZ, June 28, 2023 // The **ASU Art Museum** is pleased to present the first solo museum exhibition of Puerto Rican multidisciplinary artist **Luis Rivera Jimenez** (b. 1997 San Juan, Puerto Rico). The presentation features newly created works



completed while in residence with **CALA Alliance** in early 2023. These works, ranging from sculpture and installation to authored texts and audio, offer space for discussion around race, identity and power.

“Luis Rivera Jimenez: A Brief Proposal on Race and Cultural Cosplay” expands upon the artist’s practice, which uses the intricacies of language, political thought and daily experience in the Caribbean to create intentional spaces of learning, conversation and care. Rivera Jimenez’s sculptural objects and installations pose questions about the dynamics of race and representation. His practice reflects upon and explores the underpinning of what he describes as a “global digital society,” where a relationship between memory, images, and symbols can be traced, mapped and proliferated. This interactive exhibition is informed by communications, encounters and materials found by Rivera Jimenez during his time in Phoenix. The objects and texts found within the show build on the artist’s accumulation and processing of various tools: discussions, found objects, experiences in contact with communities, digital content and physical and ephemeral materials.

The exhibition is curated by Alana Hernandez, CALA Alliance Curator of Latinx Art at the ASU Art Museum, with Sade Moore, Curatorial Assistant at CALA Alliance. The exhibition will be on view **from August 19 through December 31, 2023**, at the ASU Art Museum at Nelson Fine Arts Center.

“I am immensely grateful for the trust and partnership of Luis in every stage of planning his first museum presentation,” said Hernandez. “Given this unique situation of working so closely together over several months and our time together in the studio at CALA Alliance, I have understood how critical Luis’s work is to the larger discourse on race and representation in the United States and Puerto Rico, in the art world and beyond. The exhibition is envisioned to be a space to hold complex dialogues on identity and power through the lens of play. While our cultural field finds itself in a time of monumental change, exhibitions like this aim to make space for more inclusive, expansive conversations about race and place, challenging how we as individuals view ourselves. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to share Luis’s work and perspective with our audiences at ASU Art Museum.”

“This show means a lot to me—it’s my first museum solo show, and it’s been an incredible opportunity to face and meet the challenges my work looks to confront outside of my home,” remarked Rivera Jimenez. “My work and research for this exhibition are built off the generosity of the Phoenix community that continues to be open to discussing their struggles with unfair narratives, racism and history. I am only grateful to give that same community space for critical engagement and dialogue. The



work in the show is asking for all of us to engage with these challenging discussions, which are increasingly more difficult to have in the United States; I hope this exhibition can be one such place to have them.”

This exhibition showcases, in part, a partnership between CALA Alliance and ASU Art Museum. CALA Alliance and ASU Art Museum work in collaboration to achieve their shared mission of incubating and accelerating the presence of Latinx art in the United States. Together CALA Alliance and the museum promote the exchange of new ideas, perspectives and experiences among artists, students and the public through various programs, especially those that educate and inspire the public about the richness of the Latinx cultural heritage.

“Luis Rivera Jimenez: A Brief Proposal on Race and Cultural Cosplay” is organized by Alana Hernandez, CALA Alliance Curator of Latinx Art at the ASU Art Museum, with Sade Moore, Curatorial Assistant at CALA Alliance. The exhibition is made possible by gifts to CALA Alliance’s general operating fund and a grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW – LUIS RIVERA JIMENEZ: A BRIEF PROPOSAL ON RACE AND CULTURAL COSPLAY

“Luis Rivera Jimenez: A Brief Proposal on Cultural Cosplay” explores communal relations to race through contexts of digital media, modes of play, and personal narratives. The presentation is organized around several new works and installations that seek to facilitate complex conversations around diaspora and representation through physical interaction and play.

A focal point of the exhibition is an installation combining authored texts, audio and sculptural elements. Rivera Jimenez creates an interactive body of work, titled “An Abundance of History and Costume,” 2023, to aid discussion and thought around identity and power. The artist incorporates several found and 3D printed items within his artist-designed pedestal, organized into three distinct sections. These objects—anime dolls, hats, found figurines—each reside within an enclosed Plexiglas box, seemingly elevating commonplace objects. With the help of fellow artists and colleagues, Rivera Jimenez creates audio recordings that trace fictionalized narratives of the figures.

As language is the primary medium for the artist to facilitate potentially complicated discussions surrounding race, some works in the exhibition utilize a more ephemeral approach. “Phatic Function #2,” 2023, features a series of wall-to-ceiling phrases and statements culled from the artist’s conversations in Phoenix, music or other aspects of pop culture. Through over 200 quotations, the artist anticipates that these pithy texts will



resonate differently with visitors, as each person is unique in their individualized experience through life.

An integral part of the presentation is a space for sharing, care, and rest. “We’re All in This Together,” 2023, is created as a site for collective learning, respite and co-creation. Visitors will encounter video and readings selected by the artist within the library space. In addition, the exhibition includes a series of mental maps that endeavor to track the flows and networks of a shared global digital culture. These maps range from the difficult to the frivolous and track racialized conditions in our society. These meditations on culture act as snapshots, where the public is invited to add to these collective mapping with their thoughts, experiences and memories. Importantly, the artist has created this space for visitors to return to several times throughout the exhibition’s run.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Luis Rivera Jimenez (b. 1997) is a Black multidisciplinary Dominican and Puerto Rican artist and researcher based in Puerto Rico. He works with physical and digital materials to create spaces and experiences for possible reconfigurations of western epistemologies and racial structures. Rivera Jimenez’s artistic practice takes “digital global society” as a starting point and borrows language and forms from contemporary art, anarchist political thought, psychoanalysis and the Caribbean quotidian. Within this study of language, the artist questions the dynamics of representation, hierarchies, collaboration, context, and “poor” materialities and how to attune them to contemporary material, digital and racial conditions.

Rivera Jimenez graduated in 2020 from Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico with a BFA in Sculpture. He is a founding member and co-coordinator of Albania and Research Head in Archivos del Caribe. In 2022 the artist was part of the Archivos del Caribe team that was awarded a Monument Lab Re: Generation grant. Recent exhibitions include: “they never told us we were niggas” at Albania Galeria, San Juan, Puerto Rico (2022); “Fantasmas del Caribe at Espacio Cachorro”, Mérida, México (2021); “La Máquina de Saber at grupoascencio”, Guadalajara, México (2021).

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

A series of three free in-person programs are offered in conjunction with “Luis Rivera Jimenez: A Brief Proposal on Race and Cultural Cosplay.”

August 19, 2023 // Opening Reception

August 20, 2023 // Translation and Language Justice in the Borderlands

September 7, 2023 // Performance

December 1, 2023 // Karaoke Night



More information about these programs and how to register will be available on the museum's website as details are confirmed.

ABOUT ASU ART MUSEUM

Arte para todos. Art for all. As a learning — centered cultural institution, ASU Art Museum centers art and artists in the service of community well-being and social good. The Arizona State University Art Museum is dedicated to collecting, commissioning, documenting and caring for important works of art to honor people and their stories. It produces exhibitions of artists of diverse media, ethnicity, geography and gender and scholarly publications serving as critical contributions to the field of art. The museum harnesses the university's breadth and depth of expertise to pioneer new and equitable models for arts learning, engagement and placemaking/placekeeping accountable to the communities we serve. The ASU Art Museum is an integral part of the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University. For more information about ASU Art Museum, visit asuartmuseum.org.

ABOUT CALA ALLIANCE

CALA Alliance (Celebración Artística de las Américas) is a Latinx arts organization based in Phoenix. CALA Alliance collaborates with artists and arts organizations to nurture artistic talent, focusing on artists from the Latin American diaspora. The organization advances its mission through innovative artist residencies, artist commissions, community workshops, and public programming that position the Metro Phoenix region as a fruitful site that acknowledges and contributes to the promotion of Latinx art throughout the United States. For more information about CALA Alliance, visit calaalliance.org.

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