

Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger announces its inaugural exhibition co-produced with Caribbean Art Initiative

The exhibition *one month after being known in that island* features eight artists from across the Caribbean and is curated by Yina Jiménez Suriel and Pablo Guardiola

Co-produced with Caribbean Art Initiative, the exhibition theme is rooted in Basel's history with the Caribbean, as site of an 18th Century treaty signed between the Spanish Monarchy and French Republic, bestowing then Hispaniola to France

First exhibition in the city's newest cultural space in a former industrial building in central Basel



Tessa Mars, *Marie Thérèse et Dieunie*, 2019,
Acrylic on Canvas, 127x101.6 cm

Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger is pleased to announce details of its inaugural curatorial project, co-produced with the Caribbean Art Initiative (CAI) and curated by Yina Jiménez Suriel (Dominican Republic) and Pablo Guardiola (Puerto Rico).

The first exhibition in the Foundation's new exhibition space in a renovated former factory in central Basel, *one month after being known in that island* will feature eight artists from across the Caribbean and its cultural diaspora who will explore the legacy of cultural emancipation through Créolité¹, against a historic backdrop of international treaties and the transfer of power. Opening in August in Basel, the exhibition will be accompanied by an extensive public programme produced in collaboration with the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel, University of Basel, and Radio X, as well as a catalogue published by Hatje Cantz including texts by Rita Indiana and Marta Aponte Alsina.

The confirmed participating artists are: Ramón Miranda Beltrán (Puerto Rico, based in San Juan); Minia Biabiany (Guadeloupe, based between Pointe-à-Pitre and Mexico City); Christopher Cozier (Trinidad and Tobago, based in Port of Spain); Tessa Mars (Haiti, based in Port-au-Prince); Elisa Bergel Melo (Venezuela, based in Santo Domingo); José Morbán (Dominican Republic, based in Santo Domingo); Tony Cruz Pabón (Puerto Rico, based in San Juan); Madeline Jiménez Santil (Dominican Republic, based in Mexico City) and Guy Régis Jr. (Haiti, based in Port-au-Prince). Each artist has been invited to respond to the exhibition subject, with overarching themes including personhood within location and the indelibility of shared histories. Miranda Beltrán and Jiménez Santil will embark on residencies in Basel in the lead-up to the exhibition, preparing works based on

the curators' intensive research (Beltrán) and on the constructed Body and its relation to inhabited space (Santil).

The exhibition's point of departure is the Treaty of Basel (1795) between the Spanish Monarchy and the French Republic which bestowed the eastern two-thirds of Hispaniola (present-day Dominican Republic) to France. The curators point out the deceptive nature of the truce, which effectively interrupted Haiti's ongoing revolution against French colonial rule. Curators Jiménez Suriel and Guardiola note, "one thing is perceiving reality from a position of power, and another is reality as perceived by those who live with the consequences." Utilising the Treaty of Basel, and the tradition of colonial agreements as an anchoring theme, the curators follow a two-pronged approach highlighting creoleness as an adaptive and self-affirming instrument for affected communities under multiple colonial dominion, whilst emphasising the flow of openness, shared wisdom, heritage, and experience so distinctive to the Caribbean.

Commenting on the exhibition curators Jiménez Suriel and Guardiola said, 'the artworks pose different ways of thinking, inhabiting, reading, and communicating the Caribbean. They point out frameworks from which multiple local realities can be approached, starting from positions of autonomy, emancipation, and resistance. At times they touch, cross or continue their journey in parallel to these dynamics of power, never denying how complex the contexts within our region are, as well as all their possibilities.'

Raphael Suter, Director of the Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger said, 'As a new foundation opening in Basel, a city with great

cultural richness and heritage, it is important that we offer an innovative programme that brings different perspectives on art for Basel locals and visitors alike. We are delighted to be working with the Caribbean Art Initiative on this exciting exhibition of contemporary art from the region and we look forward to revealing more about our future programme.'

Albertine Kopp, founder and director of the Caribbean Art Initiative noted, 'As a Basel native whose organisation advocates for art and artists of the Caribbean, I could not be more thrilled that our city will host the first such exhibition in Switzerland, and one of only a handful of exhibitions in Europe to date focusing exclusively on the contributions of today's Caribbean artists.'

We see this as an important step in the long-overdue recognition of Caribbean artists, many of whom work under difficult conditions with inadequate access to the international art world.

The Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger will offer free admission to all upcoming exhibitions, which will each be accompanied by a catalogue. The final artist list, details on the general exhibition program and public programs related to the exhibitions will be announced later this Spring.

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ADDRESS: **Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger**
Spitalstrasse 18, 4056 Basel, Switzerland

SIZE: **ca. 400 m²**

OPENING HOURS: **Wednesday to Monday, 11am to 18pm**

PRICE: **Free entry**

RENOVATION OF SPACE: **Christ & Gantenbein appointed in 2019**

CURATORS: **Yina Jiménez Suriel & Pablo Guardiola**

ABOUT KULTURSTIFTUNG BASEL H. GEIGER

The Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger was founded in 2018 with its mission to organise exhibitions in Basel on a variety of cultural themes. The founder, Sibylle Piermattei Geiger, intends for these exhibitions to be free of charge and thus easily accessible to a broad public. To have a sustainable and lasting effect, visitors will receive a free catalogue, further elaborating the theme of the respective exhibition. The foundation is located in Basel and headed by former cultural journalist, Raphael Suter. The foundation's exhibition activities and program will be announced in the summer of 2020.

www.kbhg.ch

ABOUT CARIBBEAN ART INITIATIVE

The Caribbean Art Initiative, established in 2019, is an independent, non-commercial programme and network working to foster the development of arts and culture across the entire Caribbean region, while raising awareness and promoting dialogue worldwide. With the support of international patrons and advisors, headed by Albertine Kopp, András Szántó and Pablo León de La Barra, the initiative focuses on raising awareness and understanding of the arts and culture of the Caribbean region, including artists working internationally in its cultural Diaspora. The initiative seeks to place Caribbean art and artists, as well as curators, writers, and educators, in open an active dialogue with creatives and institutions around the world.

www.caribbean.art

ABOUT THE CURATORS

YINA JIMÉNEZ SURIEL

A curator, researcher and Dominican architect, Yina earned her M.A. in Art History and Visual Culture, focusing on visual studies, from the Universitat de València, Spain. She participated in the first version of the Curando Caribe Program by Centro Cultural de España in Santo

Domingo and Centro León. She is currently developing research on women and architectural space in the Dominican Republic: *Domestic Revolution, Public History*, in collaboration with the Universitat Politècnica de València and the magazine *Arquitexto*. This aforementioned project is based on the thesis that contemporary artistic production is the first intellectual space from which the Dominican built space is problematized. Since 2018, Yina works as the Curator at Centro León, with a strong interest in strengthening the collection research program and developing new strategies to think about Dominican social history from the production of visuals.

PABLO GUARDIOLA

A visual artist who works mainly with objects, photography, and writing, Pablo's work focuses on the production of varied modes of reading and narration, as well as how they are perceived and interpreted. He has a BA in History from the University of Puerto Rico (Río Piedras) and an MFA from the San Francisco Arts Institute. He has exhibited his work in Little Tree Gallery, Raza Gallery, Romer Young Gallery, San Francisco Arts Commission, Embajada, among others. In 2012, he received grants from Southern Exposure (Alternative Exposure Grant), and the Creative Capacity Fund (CCF), both in San Francisco, CA. In 2009 he received a commission from the Cultural Equity Office in the San Francisco Arts Commission. In 2019 he gained a scholarship from the Flamboyán Artists Association, in association with the National Association of Latin Arts and Cultures and the Flamboyán Arts Fund, in Puerto Rico. Since 2013, Pablo co-directs Beta-Local in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

1 – Édouard Glissant (1990): *Poétique de la relation*. Paris: Gallimard.
Créolité: *ability to transform in a continuous way without getting lost*.
Kamau Brathwaite (1971): *The development of creole society in Jamaica 1770-1820*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Creolization: cultural process – material, psychological and spiritual – based on the stimulus and response of individuals, within a society, to their new environment and among themselves.

Kulturstiftung Basel H. Geiger
Opening August 2020

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, IMAGES OR FURTHER DETAILS ON THE PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT CHARLOTTE AT
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