



Pérez Art Museum Miami
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pamm.org



Pérez Art Museum Miami Opens Firelei Báez's First Solo Museum Show

Large-Scale, Labor-Intensive Works on Paper Explore Gender, Race, Culture and the Idea of Self in Caribbean Diasporic Communities

MIAMI – September 23, 2015 – This fall, Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) will present new works by Dominican-born artist Firelei Báez in the artist's first solo museum show, *Bloodlines*. On view from October 15, 2015 through Sunday, February 28, 2016, Báez's Focus Gallery will feature a series of new paintings created specifically for PAMM.

"Báez's new works embody a provocative investigation on decorative elements, textiles, hair designs, and body ornaments that explores methods of resistance in black communities within the United States and the Caribbean. Her exceptional paintings show a profound appreciation of diasporic histories, as well as new contemporary approaches towards painting." said María Elena Ortiz, the exhibition's curator and an assistant curator at PAMM.

These delicate works explore black culture, Afro-Caribbean folklore and the complexities of diasporic experiences from a female viewpoint, thereby claiming the relevance of the excluded historical perspective of women of color and reclaiming the female body and mind. Simultaneously, Báez places her subjects in a contemporary setting where skin tone is no longer a sufficient signifier of race.

Báez's work reflects the cultural ambiguity of the Caribbean and the diaspora, as well as contradictions within the current discourse on gender, race, class and culture. With depth and a little humor and fantasy, she carefully examines the idea of self and superficial variants that designate femininity, including body shape, hair texture and clothing through her depiction of the female form and the motifs, colors and references contained in the cloth she so intricately paints.

Highlights from Firelei Báez: *Bloodlines* include:

- *Man Without a Country (aka anthropophagist wading in the Artibonite River)*, 2014—A highly detailed work composed of over 144 small drawings that crafts parallels between obscure episodes of history and contemporary social struggles
- *Patterns of Resistance*, 2015—An arresting new series comprising blue and white drawings centered on a textile-pattern created by Báez, using different political references from social movements in the black diaspora in the United States and the Caribbean
- *Bloodlines*, 2015—A new series of portraits inspired by the tignon, a headdress which free women of color were obligated to use by law in 18th century New Orleans

The catalogue for the exhibition will feature contributions by Naima Keith and Roxane Gay.

Organization and Support

Firelei Báez: Bloodlines is organized by Pérez Art Museum Miami Assistant Curator María Elena Ortiz. This exhibition is presented by BNY Mellon with additional support from Chloé.



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Related Programs and Events

**Art Talk: Firelei Báez in Conversation with María Elena Ortiz
Thursday, October 15, 7pm**

In conjunction with her PAMM exhibition, *Bloodlines*, Firelei Báez will discuss her new series of work, which explores issues of black culture, Afro-Caribbean folklore and the complexities of diasporic experiences. Free with museum admission. Space is limited. First come, first seated.

PAMM Third Thursdays: Poplife Social featuring Chargaux and DJ Kumi presented by Rhythm Foundation

**Celebrating the opening of *Firelei Báez: Bloodlines*
Thursday, October 15, 6-10pm**

In celebration of the opening of *Firelei Báez: Bloodlines*, PAMM and Rhythm Foundation present a live performance by string duo Chargaux, featuring opening and closing sets by DJ Kumi. Purchase happy hour drink and food specials or make reservations at Verde restaurant, and partake in art-making for prizes. Admission: \$16 for adults, PAMM members free. Space is limited – pre-purchase highly recommended. Admission does not include food/drink. Members bring membership card for quick entry.

About PAMM:

Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) promotes artistic expression and the exchange of ideas, advancing public knowledge and appreciation of art, architecture and design, and reflecting the diverse community of its pivotal geographic location at the crossroads of the Americas. A 29-year-old South Florida institution formerly known as Miami Art Museum (MAM), Pérez Art Museum Miami opened a new building, designed by world-renowned architects Herzog & de Meuron, in Downtown Miami’s Museum Park on December 4, 2013. The facility is a state-of-the-art model for sustainable museum design and progressive programming and features 200,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor program space with flexible galleries; shaded outdoor verandas; a waterfront restaurant and bar; a museum shop; and an education center with a library, media lab, and classroom spaces. For more information, please visit www.pamm.org, find us on Facebook (facebook.com/perezartmuseummiami), or follow us on Twitter (@pamm).

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