

EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

**EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO OPENS
ESTAMOS BIEN – LA TRIENAL 20/21,
THE MUSEUM’S FIRST NATIONAL SURVEY OF LATINX ART
*Featuring 42 artists and collectives from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico***

March 13 – September 26, 2021



ESTAMOS BIEN
LA TRIENAL 20/21

NEW YORK, NY, February 23, 2021 – El Museo del Barrio, the first and leading museum in the country dedicated to preserving and presenting Latino art and culture, is pleased to reveal exhibition highlights for ***ESTAMOS BIEN—LA TRIENAL 20/21***, the Museum’s first large-scale national survey of Latinx art. Curated by El Museo del Barrio’s Chief Curator, Rodrigo Moura, Curator Susanna V. Temkin, and Guest Curator and Artist Elia Alba, the exhibition is on view to the public from March 13 to September 26.

Following two years of research and studio visits by the curatorial team, *ESTAMOS BIEN* features the works of 42 Latinx artists and collectives from across the United States and Puerto Rico. Originally scheduled to coincide with the 2020 U.S. Census and the presidential election, La Trienal opens in El Museo’s galleries one year after the museum first closed due to the pandemic with works that reflect the current moment.

The exhibition centers on an intersectional approach to the concept of Latinx—the much-contested term that departs from binary understandings of U.S.-Latino identity through the adoption of the gender-neutral suffix X, distancing itself from rigid definitions to allow a nuanced, more inclusive understanding of identity. In *ESTAMOS BIEN*, Latinx serves as a meeting point rather than a singular definition, as the artists participating in the show represent diverse generations, genders, ethnic and racial backgrounds, foregrounding Indigeneity, African and non-European heritages; gender nonconformity; and other multiplicities.

“Presenting a major survey of Latinx art today is not only urgent, it is also a great opportunity to continue proving its relevance nationally and globally”, says El Museo del Barrio’s **Chief Curator Rodrigo Moura**.

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The title *ESTAMOS BIEN* is adapted from a painting by **Candida Alvarez**, the only artist in the show with a previous history with El Museo, dating to the 1970s. By pluralizing the phrase, the title echoes the anthemic song by Bad Bunny and is simultaneously a declaration of defiant resilience and a provocation, conflating a sarcastic and a positive tone. While the words connect with a post-Hurricane Maria framework, they also hold broader applications, particularly within the context of the contemporary moment, with the rise of proto-totalitarian regimes in democracies in the Americas and beyond; the ongoing Black Lives Matter movement which has exposed systemic racism in society and its cultural institutions; and the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to BIPOC populations worldwide.

“While *ESTAMOS BIEN* was already in formation, these concepts have only grown more pressing in light of the global pandemic and its effects on BIPOC communities, as well as this country’s growing recognition of the Black Lives Matter and other social justice movements,” notes **Curator Susanna V. Temkin**.

Commenting on the significance of the show at this particular moment, **Guest Curator and Artist Elia Alba** affirmed, “Latinx art doesn’t rely or depend on a binary. It mixes social histories, and spans the color ranges of race. Latinx art, call it a movement, call it a space, challenges us to question the inflexibility of language and systems.”

“We are very proud to support the *Estamos Bien* La Trienal exhibit at El Museo del Barrio showcasing talented Hispanic and Latin artists, who have created pieces that address important and complex issues such as social justice, climate change and the particular effects of the global pandemic to Hispanic-Latino, Latinx and other BIPOC populations,” said **Ileana Musa, Co-Head of International Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley**. “Celebrating diverse perspectives is a core value at Morgan Stanley, and we are excited to support these emerging artists and their inspiring work.”

“We need to rewrite the cultural history of the United States,” says **Executive Director Patrick Charpenel**. “This exhibition will serve as an opportunity to continue this important work, further expanding our understanding of cultural legacy, American history, and the art historical canon.”

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS:



Joey Terrill, *Black Jack 8*, 2008 | Lucia Hierro, *Racks*, 2019

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Lucia Hierro borrows and extracts from the mainstream art historical canon to create objects that reflect on the urban experience and vernacular commodities she encountered growing up in New York City. Her sculptures and installations play with scale, proportion, and humor to both elevate and question our familiarity with commodity culture and its colonialist ties.

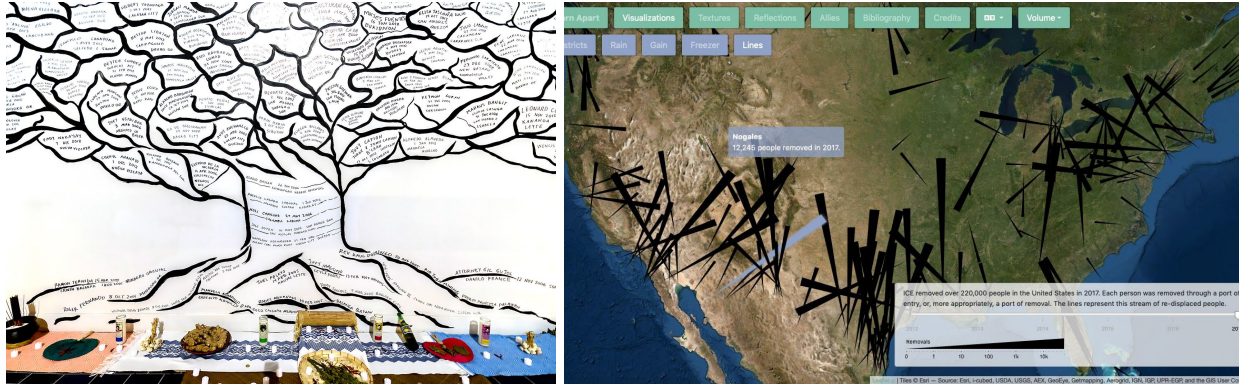
Also drawing from commodity culture, for nearly four decades artist **Joey Terrill** has stood at the forefront of queer Chicano art, pushing the boundaries of form and cultural representation by exploring the confluences of race and sexuality. Since testing HIV-positive in 1989 Terrill's artistic production has been intimately connected to his identity as both a Chicano HIV-positive gay man and a health educator. He is known for his series of Pop art inspired and rasquache infused still-life paintings in which antiretroviral drugs and consumer products are contrasted in a critique of the pharmaceutical industry that profits from the disease.



Eddie Aparicio, *City Bus Memorial* (Fig. and Ave. 60, Los Angeles, California) | **Patrick Martinez**, *Defeat and Victory*, 2020

The complex colonial underpinnings of our contemporary cities can be seen in **Eddie Aparicio's** large-scale rubber paintings. By casting the surfaces of ficus trees from his native Los Angeles—which have strong ties to pre-Historic cultures in Central America and mirror the history of Mexican immigration to the United States—the artist creates a dialogue between past and present. Similarly, artist **Patrick Martinez** maintains a diverse practice that explores subjects drawn from everyday life, ranging from personalized cakes and neon signs to Pee Chee school notebooks and city walls. His mixed-media landscape paintings, comprising distressed stucco, spray paint, window security bars, vinyl signage, ceramic tile, and neon sign elements, unearth sites of personal, civic and cultural loss. Created during quarantine, his work on view in ESTAMOS BIEN makes direct reference to the global pandemic and its imprint on the cityscape.

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Carolina Caycedo, *Genealogy of a Struggle*, 2017 | *Torn Apart / Separados*, 2021

Creating a space for denunciation and memory, **Carolina Caycedo** presents *Genealogy of Resistance*, a mural in the form of a family tree recognizes environmental activists who have been killed and threatened in recent years all around the world. An ongoing project that adapts to exhibition spaces, the names of the people, along with the place and date of their death or attack, are written in the roots, trunk, and branches of the tree. Similarly using mapping technology, **Torn Apart / Separados** is a rapidly deployed critical data & visualization intervention in the USA's 2018 "Zero Tolerance Policy" for asylum seekers at the US Ports of Entry and the humanitarian crisis that has followed.

In response to El Museo del Barrio's closure due to the pandemic, **ESTAMOS BIEN – LA TRIENAL 20/21** debuted last Summer 2020 with a series of online commissioned projects, turning La Trienal into a year-long initiative. A highlight includes **Collective Magpie's** online archive, "Who Designs Your Race?"—an interactive project borrowing from the language of official surveys such as the United States and Mexican censuses, asking questions such as how and when participants *feel* race as part of one of its five sections, the platform converts such supposedly objective tools into a subjective, poetic exploration for how to think and speak about race. Architecturally-scaled infographics created as a result of the survey will be on view at El Museo del Barrio. Additional commissioned artists include **Lizania Cruz**, **Michael Menchaca**, **Poncili Creación**, and **xime izquierdo ugaz**, who will also have works on view on-site.

To view the online commissions, visit: <https://www.elmuseo.org/la-trienal>.

El Museo will also debut several on-site commissioned installations, including a new architectural intervention by Chicago-based artist **Edra Soto**, whose practice engages her urban vernacular surroundings. Entitled *GRAFT*, the project is part of an ongoing series that explores architectural structures commonly found in Puerto Rico and other parts of the Caribbean called *quiebrasoles* and *rejas*. Her site-specific installation is part of El Museo's inaugural exhibition within the museum's new space, **Room 110**. Additional on-site commissioned artists include **Dionis Ortiz**, who will debut *Let There Be Light* – a large-scale installation composed of vinyl floor tiling, a vernacular material whose craft is emblematic of the Dominican American experience in Harlem.

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COMPLETE LIST OF ARTISTS:

Francis Almendárez

b. 1987, Los Angeles, CA;
lives and works in
Houston, TX

Candida Alvarez

b. 1955, Brooklyn, NY;
lives and works in
Chicago, IL and Michigan

Eddie R. Aparicio

b. 1990, Los Angeles, CA;
lives and works in Los
Angeles, CA

Fontaine Capel

b. 1990, Brooklyn, NY;
lives and works in Queens,
NY

Carolina Caycedo

b. 1978, London, England;
raised in Colombia; lives
and works in Los Angeles,
CA

Juan William Chávez

b. 1977, Lima, Peru; lives
and works in St. Louis, MO

Yanira Collado

b. 1975, Brooklyn, NY;
lives and works in Miami,
FL

Collective Magpie

Founded in 2001, based in
San Diego, CA

Lizania Cruz

b. 1983, Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic; lives
and works in Brooklyn, NY

Amaryllis DeJesus

Moleski

b. 1985, Bordeaux,
France, raised across the
East Coast, MidWest, and
southern U.S.; lives and
works in Brooklyn, NY

Dominique Duroseau

b. 1978, Chicago, IL;
raised in Haiti; lives and
works in Newark, NJ

Justin Favela b. 1986,
Las Vegas, NV; lives and
works in Las Vegas, NV

Luis Flores

b. 1985, West Covina, CA;
lives and works in Los
Angeles, CA

ektor garcia

b. 1985, Red Bluff, CA;
lives and works
nomadically

María Gaspar

b. 1980, Chicago, IL; lives
and works in Chicago, IL

Victoria Gitman

b. 1972, Buenos Aires,
Argentina; lives and works
in Hallandale Beach, FL

José Antonio Gómez

b. 1967, Mexico; lives and
works in Las Vegas, NV

Manuela González

b. 1983, Miami, FL; raised
in Medellín, Colombia;
lives and works in New
York, NY

Lucia Hierro

b. 1987, New York, NY;
lives and works in New
York, NY

xime izquierdo ugaz

b. 1992, Lima, Peru; lives
and works in New York
and Lima, Peru

Esteban Jefferson

b. 1989, New York, NY;
lives and works in New
York, NY

Roberto Lugo

b. 1981, Philadelphia, PA;
lives and works in
Philadelphia, PA

Maria José

b. 1992, Caguas, Puerto
Rico; lives and works in
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Carlos Martiel

b. 1989, Havana, Cuba;
lives and works in New
York, NY

Patrick Martinez

b. 1980, Pasadena, CA;
lives and works in Los
Angeles, CA

Yvette Mayorga

b. 1991, Silvis and raised
in Moline, IL; lives and
works in Chicago, IL

Groana Melendez

b. 1984, Brooklyn, NY;
raised between New York
City and Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic; lives
and works in the Bronx,
NY

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Michael Menchaca

b. 1985, San Antonio, TX; lives and works in San Antonio, TX

The Museum of Pocket Art

Established 2004 in El Paso, TX; based in Austin, TX

Dionis Ortiz

b. 1979, Harlem, NY; lives and works in Washington Heights, NY

Poncili Creación

Based in San Juan, Puerto Rico

Simonette Quamina

b. 1982, Ontario, Canada; lives and works in New York, NY

Vick Quezada

b. 1979, El Paso, TX; lives and works in Northampton, MA

Sandy Rodriguez

b. 1975, National City, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

Yelaine Rodriguez

b. 1990, the Bronx, NY; lives and works in the Bronx, NY

Nyugen E. Smith

b. 1976, Jersey City, NJ; lives and works in Jersey City, NJ

Edra Soto

b. 1971, Santurce, Puerto Rico; lives and works in Chicago, IL

Joey Terrill

b. 1955, Los Angeles, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

Torn Apart/Separados

Active in 2018

Ada Trillo

b. 1976, El Paso, TX; lives and works in Philadelphia, PA

Vincent Valdez

b. 1977, San Antonio, TX; lives and works in Houston, TX

Raelis Vasquez

b. 1995, Mao Valverde, Dominican Republic; lives and works in New York, NY

ABOUT LA TRIENAL:

The first iteration of *LA TRIENAL* is born out of the historic **(S) Files** series, held in seven iterations between 1999 and 2013. Originally titled the "Selection Files," the exhibition was created as an open call to provide a platform for Latino and Latin American artists in New York City. Later growing into an important biennial of Latinx art, the *(S) Files* series has featured such notable artists as Allora & Calzadilla (2000), Firelei Baéz (2011) Margarita Cabrera (2002), Alejandro Cesarco (2002), Nicolás Dumit Estévez (2002), Pablo Helguera (2000), Miguel Luciano (2002) Carlos Motta (2005), Iván Navarro (1999), Angel Otero (2011), and Juana Valdes (2000). Following years of research and studio visits by the curatorial team, *ESTAMOS BIEN* expands upon this legacy and extends its scope to include artists from throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

CATALOGUE:

ESTAMOS BIEN – LA TRIENAL 20/21 is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue which includes essays by the curators, conversation between some of the artists conducted by artist Elia Alba as part of her Supper Club series, and individual short interviews with the participants. In the back pages, the reader brings together poems and excerpts of essays by notable thought leaders Lourdes Alberto, Roger Bonair-Agard, Ariana Brown, Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, Deborah Cullen and Carolina Ponce de León, Esteban Jefferson, Ed Morales, Alan Pelaez Lopez, Dixia Ramírez d'Oleo, Rose Salseda and Adriana Zavala. Edited by Elia Alba, Rodrigo Moura and Susanna V. Temkin. Designed by Elaine Ramos. 80 color images, 336 pages. English and Spanish. Published by El Museo del Barrio, New York.

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VIRTUAL OPENING RECEPTION:

A virtual opening reception will be held on Friday, March 12th at 6:00pm EST. The event will include greetings from special guests; a walk-through of exhibition highlights by the Curators; a talk with participating artists; and more. Free admission. To RSVP, visit www.elmuseo.org.

TICKETING:

Pay-what-you-wish. To ensure the safety of staff and visitors, El Museo del Barrio recommends reserving your visit through our timed entry system. To reserve tickets, please visit www.elmuseo.org.

SUPPORT:

ESTAMOS BIEN – LA TRIENAL 20/21 is made possible by The Jacques & Natasha Gelman Foundation. Leadership support is provided by The Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Commissioned works are made possible by Tony Bechara. Major funding is provided by Morgan Stanley and The Lenore G. Tawney Foundation. Generous funding is provided by The Cowles Charitable Trust and La Trienal Council: Craig Robins and Jackie Soffer, Estrellita and Daniel Brodsky and The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at The Miami Foundation. Additional support is provided by The El Museo Fund.

ABOUT EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO:

El Museo del Barrio, founded by a coalition of Puerto Rican educators, artists, and activists, is the nation's leading Latino and Latin American cultural institution. The Museum welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of these communities through its extensive Permanent Collection, varied exhibitions and publications, bilingual public programs, educational activities, festivals, and special events.

The Museum is located at 1230 Fifth Avenue at 104th Street in New York City. The Museum is open for limited hours until further notice: Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00am – 5:00pm. To connect with El Museo, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). For more information, visit www.elmuseo.org.

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