

CARIBBEAN CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD

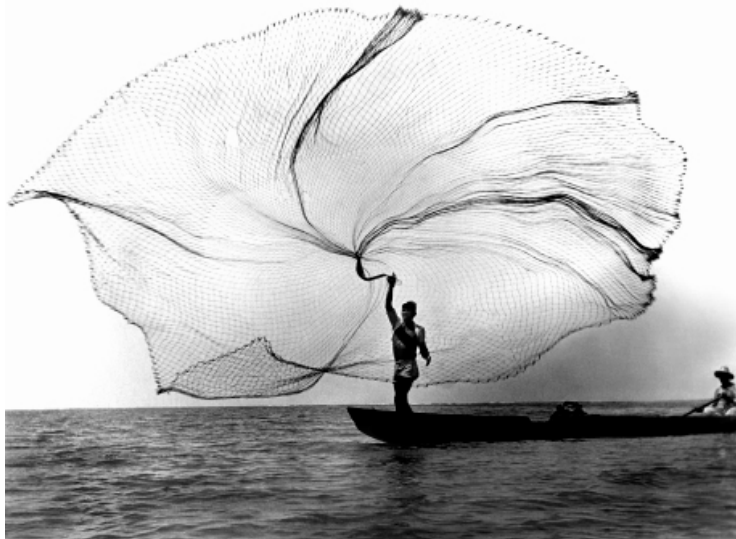
For Immediate Release:

El Museo del Barrio, the Queens Museum of Art and The Studio Museum in Harlem present *Caribbean: Crossroads of the World*, a landmark exhibition exploring the history and art of the Caribbean

Multimedia exhibition to open at all three venues week of June 12, 2012, with subsequent Caribbean events and collaborations in New York City throughout 2012



Arnaldo Roche Rabell, *We have to dream in blue (Hay que soñar en azul)*, 1986. Collection of John Belk & Margarita Serapion, courtesy Walter Otero Gallery



Leo Matiz, *Peacock from the Sea (Pavo real del mar)*, 1939. Leo Matiz Foundation. Photo: Leo Matiz Foundation, Alejandra Matiz



Renée Cox, *Redcoat*, from "Queen Nanny of the Maroons" series, 2004. Courtesy the artist

NEW YORK, NY, June 5, 2012—*Caribbean: Crossroads of the World* is the culmination of nearly a decade of collaborative research and scholarship organized by El Museo del Barrio in collaboration with the Queens Museum of Art and The Studio Museum in Harlem. The exhibition, comprised of more than 500 works of art spanning four centuries, emphasizes the relationship between the Caribbean and the United States and the artists from both locales who contribute to ongoing conversations about national and regional identity and belonging.

Presenting work at the three museums and accompanied by an ambitious range of programs and events, *Caribbean: Crossroads* illuminates changing aesthetics and ideologies and provokes meaningful conversations about topics ranging from commerce and cultural hybridity to politics and popular culture. A single "Passport to the Caribbean" purchased at any institution will allow admission to all three venues for the duration of the exhibition.

El Museo del Barrio: June 12, 2012 to January 6, 2013
Queens Museum of Art: June 17, 2012 to January 6, 2013
The Studio Museum in Harlem: June 14, 2012 to October 21, 2012

Margarita Aguilar, Director of El Museo del Barrio, notes: “El Museo del Barrio is very proud to be leading groundbreaking research into the artistic heritage of a region that scholars have too often overlooked. With our visionary collaborators, we are expanding our understanding of the region. The rich history of the Caribbean and its global impact is astonishing, and we look forward to celebrating this with our communities through the arts.”

Taking the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) as its starting point, *Caribbean: Crossroads* engages the rich history of the Caribbean and its transatlantic cultures. The broad range of themes examined in the multi-venue project draws attention to diverse views of the contemporary Caribbean and sheds new light on the encounters and exchanges among the countries and territories comprising the New World.

The works on view, culled from collections around the world, represent Caribbean perspectives and external perceptions of the region through a wide range of subjects and artistic practices that include portraiture, spiritual and religious themes, depictions of labor and historical events, abstraction, and contemporary video and installation work. This selection provides a visual history of the Caribbean as a pivotal crossroads between Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas.

“*Caribbean: Crossroads* is a vital extension of the Studio Museum’s commitment to exhibiting a broad and diverse range of artistic practices,” declares Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator of The Studio Museum in Harlem. “We are thrilled to partner with our peer institutions, El Museo and the Queens Museum, to present this exceptional opportunity to explore the art, culture and history of a region that has influenced and inspired artists of African descent for centuries.”

Among the 379 featured artists are Janine Antoni, John James Audubon, David Bade, Myrna Báez, Alvaro Barrios, Jean Michel Basquiat, José Bedia, Isaac Mendes Belisario, Ernest Breleur, Agostino Brunias, José Campeche, Tony Capellán, Esteban Chartrand, Jaime Colson, Renée Cox, Winifred Dania, Edouard Duval-Carrié, Sandra Eleta, Paul Gauguin, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Enrique Grau, May Henríquez, Winslow Homer, Hector Hyppolite, Yubi Kirindongo, Wifredo Lam, Hugo Larson, Mark Latamie, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Elvis Lopez, Edna Manley, Leo Matiz, Ana Mendieta, Rachelle Mozman, Jesús “Bubu” Negrón, Ebony G. Patterson, Amelia Peláez, Marcel Pinas, Camille Pissarro, Ryan Oduber, Francisco Oller, Arnaldo Roche Rabell, Armando Reveron, Ernesto Salmerón and Hank Willis Thomas.

Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director of the Queens Museum of Art, states: “The wonderful vibrancy of Queens stems from the myriad cross-cultural conversations that take place on a daily basis in the country’s most diverse locale, and Caribbean voices contribute in meaningful ways to the ongoing discourse shaping our borough, and our city. With *Caribbean: Crossroads*, three visionary institutions have come together to explore those voices, artistic traditions, historical events and poignant themes that speak as much to the Caribbean of the past centuries, as they do to the ever-changing Diaspora that we experience everyday in Queens.”

Caribbean: Crossroads explores six distinct themes split amongst the three venues: *Counterpoints*, *Patriot Acts*, *Fluid Motions*, *Kingdoms of this World*, *Shades of History*, and *Land of the Outlaw*.

“We’ve employed a polyphonic perspective to deal with a huge archipelago that it is as diverse and complex as New York City, which is, to many, the largest Caribbean city,” reflects Project Director Elvis Fuentes. “For the first time ever, this project will examine the impact of Africa, Southeast Asia and Europe on the visual culture of the Caribbean, including painters that were part of the Impressionists and Surrealists in France, to homegrown schools recovering popular traditions and developing original styles...the public will realize how intertwined the Caribbean and American experiences truly are.”

El Museo del Barrio

Counterpoints reflects on the economic developments of the Caribbean, focusing on the shift from plantation systems and commodities such as sugar, tobacco, and fruit to the oil and tourism industries. Today, a new counterpoint is unfolding, in which the oil and tourism industries collide. One requires ideal, pristine beaches

and waters while the other threatens the same important resources. Both are heavily dependent on scarce natural resources which are threatened by climate change.

Patriot Acts studies the central role that creole culture and notions of hybridity play in national and regional identity. Artists and intellectuals often pitted traditional, academic aesthetics against the “authentic,” indigenous and African heritages of the Caribbean. Among the subthemes explored here are the tensions between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, the complex notion of the self, and the concept of a Caribbean style.

Queens Museum of Art

Fluid Motions addresses the significance of water in the history of the Caribbean and how new developments in transportation have reshaped commercial routes, migratory movements and communications within the region and beyond. As a point of encounter between world powers, the Caribbean has experienced endless movement of people, goods and ideas. Natural disasters, military interventions, and political convulsions act as catalysts for this movement.

Kingdoms of this World considers the variety of people, languages, art forms, and religions that co-exist in the Caribbean. Spiritual practices, popular music and dance genres, newly created dialects, and Carnival emerge from the diffusion and reconciliation of different cultures converging in the region. Artists have interpreted the ways in which cultures utilize transformation and camouflage as a metaphor for survival and resistance.

The Studio Museum in Harlem

Shades of History offers a broad perspective on the various ways artists have explored the significance and relevance of race to the history and visual culture of the Caribbean. The works on view examine the legacies of slavery and abolition, class- and race-based conflict, significant figures in Caribbean history and the ideals of social and cultural movements, providing a visual entry into the complex history of ideas of race at the “crossroads of the world.”

Land of the Outlaw brings together works of art that address perceptions of the Caribbean as both a utopian place of pleasure and a site of illicit or deviant activity. The notion of deviance appears in various myths and stereotypical characters—including pirates, treasure-hunters, slave traders and even zombies—that are now part of global popular culture. At the same time, a parallel view of the Caribbean as paradise was created through mass-produced illustrations and texts.

Education and Public Programs

An extensive series of public programs, both organized by the three presenting museums and through collaborations with organizations around New York City, will provide myriad opportunities to delve further into themes presented in *Caribbean: Crossroads*. Films, concerts, dance performances, literary readings, will take place throughout the run of the exhibition and throughout the city. While the core programming will take place at El Museo, the Queens Museum and the Studio Museum, outreach to partners in the City’s Caribbean and cultural communities have yielded a full palette of programming. The website www.caribbeancrossroads.org will provide the latest information on programs and events. Highlights include:

Carnival Panorama!

September 21, 2012, 3pm-8pm

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadows Park, Queens

Carnival is an integral part of many Caribbean cultures and this full-day festival brings together invited local Caribbean groups to create their very own version of a mini-carnival celebration. Dominican artists will create horned devil masks and Puerto Rican bomba and plena bands will move the crowd; Haitian Rara bands and dancers adorned in brightly colored and elaborate costumes will show their Voodoo strength; Guadeloupan *gwo ka* jazz will fill the park; and the full day of activities will conclude with a musical performance finale by the renowned Pantonic Steel Orchestra of Brooklyn.

Crossroads: Caribbean Diaspora in New York

October 11–13, 2012,

El Museo del Barrio and The Studio Museum in Harlem

This three-day symposium brings together scholars, artists, writers and community leaders to examine the arts and culture of the Caribbean diaspora in New York, as well as the legacy of artists and activists who gave voice to the communities of the diaspora across the region. Through panels, performances and screenings at El Museo del Barrio and The Studio Museum in Harlem, scholars and practitioners explore the literary, visual, and performing arts; living expressions of religious traditions; and the work of community organizers and civil rights activists in the diaspora.

Curatorial Team

Project Director: Elvis Fuentes, Curator of Special Projects for El Museo del Barrio

Edward J. Sullivan, Helen Gould Sheppard Professor, Professor of Art History, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University; **Lowery Stokes Sims**, Curator, Museum of Arts and Design, NY; **Gerald Alexis**, scholar of the Institut Canadien de Quebec, and former Minister of Culture in Haiti; **Yolanda Wood Pujols**, Director of the Center for Caribbean Studies, Casa de las Americas, Havana, and Professor of Art History at the School of Arts and Letters, University of Havana. Institutional Curators include **Deborah Cullen**, Director of Curatorial Programs and Exhibitions at El Museo del Barrio; **Rocío Aranda-Alvarado**, Curator at El Museo del Barrio; Hitomi Iwasaki, Director of Exhibitions at the Queens Museum of Art; and **Naima J. Keith**, Assistant Curator at The Studio Museum in Harlem.

Related Publication

A major accompanying publication, ***Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World***, will serve as a resource for the study of early modern and contemporary Caribbean history, art, and culture. Edited by Deborah Cullen and Elvis Fuentes and co-published by Yale University Press, it features texts by leading scholars, curators, artists and public intellectuals.

Funding

Presenting Sponsor:

MetLife Foundation

Leadership support provided by:



Major support provided by The Reed Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

Additional support is provided by the National Endowment of the Arts; Agnes Gund; Bacardi USA; Mondriaan Fund, Amsterdam; Christie's, Inc.; Maduro & Curiel's Bank N.V.; Tony Bechara; Ramón and Nercys Cernuda; The Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation; Dr. Blas A. Reyes; Jacqueline L. Curiel; Susan R. Delvalle; Elena de Murias; and Benjamin Ortiz and Victor Torchia, Jr.

The exhibition publication is supported by The Dedalus Foundation and Patricia & Howard Farber Foundation. The exhibition and related programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency; Speaker Christine Quinn and the New York City Council; Institut Français; the Netherlands Cultural Services; and the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York.

NYC & Company is the lead media partner for this exhibition. Additional media sponsorship is provided by Cablevision, MTA NYC Transit, WABC-TV, and WXTV Univision 41. Special thanks to ARC Magazine, Art Experience: New York City, Bomb, Christie's, Inc., Flavorpill, and Urban Latino for their additional media support.

Partnerships

In support of *Caribbean: Crossroads*, the project team has built a roster of partners who will be presenting collateral programming throughout the run of the exhibition.

For Rent: Marc Latamie

Americas Society, May 15–July 28, 2012

americas-society.org

Devoted to midcareer artists from the Caribbean and Canada, *For Rent* is based on the concept of transferring the use and symbolic value of Americas Society's art gallery to the artist for the development of an in-situ installation. This second installment in the *For Rent* series features artist Marc Latamie.

Revolution Not Televised

Bronx Museum of the Arts

July 19–August 7, 2012

bronxmuseum.org

Taking inspiration from Gil Scott-Heron's famous song-poem that declared a wave of cultural changes imperceptible to the mainstream, this exhibition will feature works by contemporary Cuban artists from the museum's collection as well as major private loans.

Caribe Now: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Diaspora

Nathan Cummings Foundation

October 5th, 2012–January 18th, 2013

nathancummings.org

Caribe Now features work that explores a diversity of themes of interest to artists of Caribbean heritage working in the New York City area, focusing on the connections between personal experiences, life history, and the public, outward visual expressions that reflect on the contemporary human condition.

Carnegie Hall's Neighborhood Concert Series with Yosvany Terry

El Museo del Barrio

November 17, 2012, 4:00pm–6:30pm

carnegiehall.org

As Part of Carnegie Hall's annual Voices from Latin America festival, and its Neighborhood Concert Series, El Museo del Barrio will host acclaimed Cuban saxophonist, jazz and contemporary musician Yosvany Terry.

###

About El Museo del Barrio

El Museo del Barrio, New York's leading Latino cultural institution, welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures. Their richness is represented in El Museo's wide-ranging collections and critically acclaimed exhibitions, complemented by film, literary, visual and performing arts series, cultural celebrations, and educational programs. ***Voces y Visiones: Gran Caribe*** will be on view at El Museo del Barrio concurrently with *Caribbean: Crossroads*, giving visitors a deeper understanding of the Caribbean presence in American culture. *Gran Caribe* features works drawn from El Museo del Barrio's wide-ranging Permanent Collection, exploring the vast diversity and complexity of the Caribbean basin.

El Museo del Barrio is open Tuesday to Saturday, 11am-6pm; Sunday, 1pm-5pm. Museum admission is by suggested donation: \$9 for adults, \$5 for students (with valid identification) and seniors. Free for children 12 and under. Wednesdays are free for seniors. The third Saturday of every month is free at El Museo, thanks to generous support from Target. www.elmuseo.org, 1230 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10029

About the Queens Museum of Art

The Queens Museum of Art was established in 1972 to provide a vital cultural center in Flushing Meadows Corona Park for the borough's unique, international population. Today it is home to the Panorama of the City of New York, a 9,335 square foot scale model of the five boroughs, and features temporary exhibitions of modern

and contemporary art that reflect the cultural diversity of Queens, as well as a collection of Tiffany glass from the Neustadt Collection of Tiffany Glass. The Museum provides valuable educational outreach through a number of programs geared toward schoolchildren, teens, families, seniors and individuals with physical and mental disabilities.

The Queens Museum of Art is open Wednesday to Sunday, noon-6pm. Museum admission is by suggested donation: \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for students (with valid identification) and seniors. Free for members and children 5 and under. www.queensmuseum.org, New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens, NY 11368

About The Studio Museum in Harlem

Founded in 1968, The Studio Museum in Harlem is a contemporary art museum that focuses on the work of artists of African descent locally, nationally and globally, as well as work that has been inspired and influenced by African-American culture. The Museum is committed to serving as a unique resource in the local community, and in national and international arenas, by making artworks and exhibitions concrete and personal for each viewer. **Primary Sources: Artists in Residence 2011–12**, featuring the work of Njideka Akunyili, Meleko Mokgosi and Xaviera Simmons, will be on view concurrently with *Caribbean: Crossroads*.

The Studio Museum is open Thursday and Friday, noon-9pm; Saturday, 10am-6pm; Sunday, noon-6pm. The Museum is closed to the public but available for school and group tours on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Museum admission is by suggested donation: \$7 for adults, \$3 for students (with valid identification) and seniors. Free for children 12 and under. Sundays are free at the Studio Museum, thanks to generous support from Target. www.studiomuseum.org, 144 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027

Media Contacts

For further information, images, or to arrange interviews, please contact:

El Museo del Barrio

Von Diaz
(212) 660-7102
vdiaz@elmuseo.org

Queens Museum of Art

David Strauss
(718) 592-9700 x145
dstrauss@queensmuseum.org

The Studio Museum in Harlem

Elizabeth Gwinn
(646) 214-2154
egwinn@studiomuseum.org

