

SP-Arte

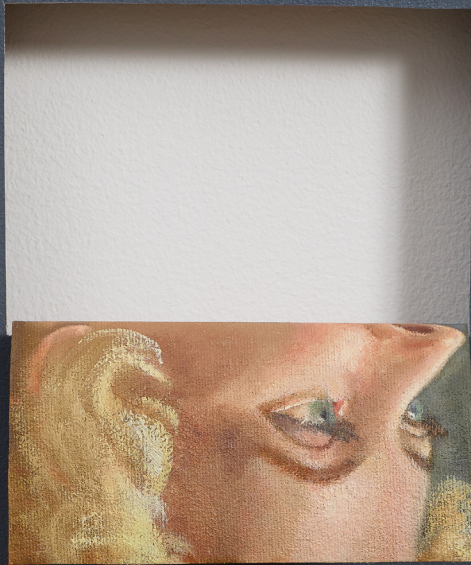
April 3–7, 2019

Alexander Gray Associates

SP-Arte

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Booth H12

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Represented Artists:

Polly Apfelbaum

Frank Bowling

Ricardo Brey

Luis Camnitzer

Melvin Edwards

Coco Fusco

Harmony Hammond

Lorraine O'Grady

Betty Parsons

Joan Semmel

Hassan Sharif

Regina Silveira

Valeska Soares

Hugh Steers

Jack Tworkov

Melvin Edwards

Melvin Edwards (b.1937) is a pioneer in the history of contemporary African-American art and sculpture. Born in Houston, Texas, he began his artistic career at the University of Southern California, where he met and was mentored by Hungarian painter Francis de Erdely. In 1965 the Santa Barbara Museum of Art organized Edwards' first solo exhibition, which launched his professional career. He moved to New York City in 1967, where shortly after his arrival, his work was exhibited at the then newly created Studio Museum, and in 1970 became the first African-American sculptor to have works presented in a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum.

Edwards' work reflects his engagement with the history of race, labor, violence, as well as with themes of African Diaspora. Making welding his preferred medium, his compositions are studies in abstraction and minimalism. Edwards creates sculptures by welding metal objects such as tools, knives, hooks, and machine parts, to construct objects distinguished by formal simplicity and powerful materiality. He is best known for his sculptural series *Lynch Fragments*, which spans three periods: the early 1960s, when he responded to racial violence in the United States; the early 1970s, when his activism concerning the Vietnam War motivated him to return to the series; and from 1978 to the present, as he continues to explore a variety of themes. Edwards has felt deeply connected to Africa and the African Diaspora since the 1970s, when he and his late wife, poet Jayne Cortez, began visiting the continent. He taught metal-welding in several countries, establishing workshops and mentoring a younger generation of African welders.

Melvin Edwards' work has been widely exhibited nationally and internationally, including the one-person exhibitions *Melvin Edwards* at Auroras, São Paulo (2019); *Melvin Edwards: Lynch Fragments* at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (São Paulo, 2018), *Melvin Edwards: Five Decades* at the Columbus Museum of Art (2016) and the Nasher Sculpture Center (2015); *Melvin Edwards Sculpture: A Thirty-Year Retrospective 1963 – 1993*, an itinerant retrospective at the Nueberger Museum of Art (1993), The Art Museum of Florida and the Hood Museum of Art (1994); Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, 1968). His work has recently been included in the exhibitions 11th Mercosul Biennial, (Porto Alegre, 2018); *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, Tate Modern (London, 2017); *All the World's Futures*, The Venice Biennale (Venice, 2015); *African-American Artists and Abstraction*, National Museum of Fine Arts (Havana 2014); *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles, 1960-1980*, MoMA PS1 (New York, 2012); among others. Edwards' work is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College, Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Winter Park, FL; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; among others.



Palmares, 1988, welded steel, 13.8h x 7w x 6.8d in (35.05h x 17.78w x 17.27d cm)



Above: *Variações de correntes em cor (Chain Variations in Color)*, 2019, watercolor on paper, 21.26h x 29.53w in (54h x 75w cm)
Left: *Not So Easy*, 2019, welded steel, 39.76h x 15.75w x 15.75d in (101h x 40w x 40d cm)



Melvin Edwards, installation view, Auroras, São Paulo (2019)



Variações de correntes em cor (Chain Variations in Color), 2019, watercolor on paper, 8.66h x 11.69w in (22h x 29.7w cm)



Boa Sorte, Primeiro Dia (Good Luck, First Day), 2019, welded steel, 14.76h x 14.76w x 6.10d in (37.50h x 37.50w x 15.5d cm)



Melvin Edwards: Lynch Fragments, installation view, Museu de arte de São Paulo (2018)

Valeska Soares

Valeska Soares (b.1957) was born in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and from a young age, she was exposed to references from a variety of cultural milieus, including poetry, literature, film, psychology, and mythology. She studied architecture at Universidade Santa Úrsula, Rio de Janeiro; this training reinforced an interest in site specificity, with artworks that consider both contextual history and spatial constructs. The Brazilian art scene in the late-1980s and early 1990s catalyzed Soares' artistic career in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and in 1992, she moved to Brooklyn, NY, continuing her artistic education and career. From New York, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, her work has been positioned in multiple platforms, reinforcing the globalized art world's questions of geography, cultural and national identity, discipline, and form.

Soares' bodies of work are linked thematically, but deploy diverse strategies to address issues and concerns through materials, forms, and experiences. Utilizing tools of minimalism and conceptualism, her work embraces emotion and humanity, mining territories of love, intimacy and desire; loss and longing; memory and language. She has explored these elusive themes through a myriad of tactics, infusing objects such as mirrors, clocks, glass, books, furniture, and flora with poetics, narrative, and alchemy. The resulting artworks—painting, sculpture, installations, video, and audio experiences—morph the physical and the psychological, the body, and the mind. In Soares' refined visual language, reflective objects suggest reflective thinking, concealed images reveal unexpected mysteries, and accumulated words disintegrate linear narrative.

Desire is a central theme in Soares' practice, enticing viewer engagement by alluring all five senses. Her installations have included perfume, decaying flowers, or spirits; these works result in phenomenological experiences that shift perception and expectations. In her words, "desire is like a vanishing point: every time you go towards it, it recedes a little." Another motif in her work is the transference of personal memory and collective history; the artist frequently re-purposes second hand objects that she considers charged by "the lives and memories [of former owners], becoming for a moment in time, part of those personal narratives as each one travels from subject to subject." Canvases made of book covers convene and re-orient individual narratives; while collections of empty antique cake platters or half-filled drinking glasses suggest rituals or celebrations that have been suspended in time. Soares' art encourages the widest possible viewer experience, rejecting the idea of a singular interpretation or message.

She describes this interest in unrestricted opportunities for engagement; as "what interests me is the surprise in how each person is going to perceive the piece. And even the same person, on different days—depending on the sun and the moon, a dream they had, how they woke up—the work is never the same."



Doubleface (Gris de Payne), 2017, oil paint and cut out on vintage oil painting, 22.75h x 17.50w x 0.75d in (57.78h x 44.45w x 1.91d cm)

Lorraine O'Grady

For more than four decades, Lorraine O'Grady (b.1934) has challenged cultural conventions. Her multidisciplinary practice utilizes the diptych as a tool to critique Western society. As she argues, "With the diptych, there's no being saved, no before and after, no either/or; it's both/and, at the same time." Insisting on both/and, for O'Grady, the diptych presents a constant exchange between equals, forwarding "miscegenated thinking" by eroding hierarchical oppositions. This thinking, which seeks to confront the limitations of a culture built on exclusivity and resistance to difference, advocates for concepts like hybridity, gender fluidity, and process rather than resolution.

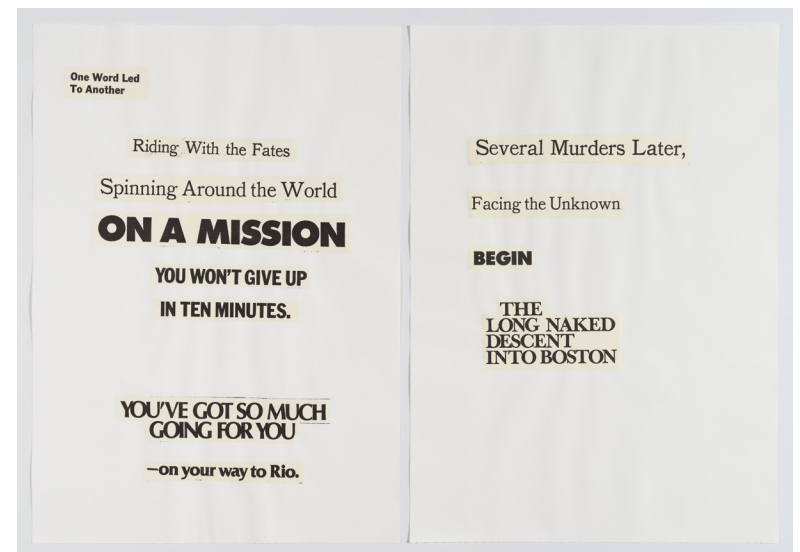
Born in Boston to West Indian parents, O'Grady was a talented scholar. She was educated at the Girls Latin School before studying economics and Spanish literature at Wellesley College (class of 1955). While still a student, she passed the US government's challenging Management Intern Program (MIP) exam and worked as a Research Economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. By the late 1960s, she was working in Chicago at a commercial translation agency while volunteering for Jesse Jackson and his organization Operation Breadbasket. However, after opening her own translation agency and fulfilling large contracts for *Playboy* and *Encyclopædia Britannica*, she decided to abandon her career as a translator.

By the early 1980s, O'Grady had become an active voice in the alternative New York art scene. A volunteer at the black avant-garde gallery Just Above Midtown, she produced work that critically reflected on race, class, and social identity. In her performance *Mlle Bourgeoise Noire* (1980–83), for example, O'Grady pioneered institutional critique, attacking the racial apartheid of the mainstream art world. Championing hybrid subject positions, in the 1990s, she addressed issues surrounding class, gender, racism, and ethnography with series like *Miscegenated Family Album* (1980/1994). Constructing what O'Grady terms a "novel in space," *Miscegenated Family Album* consists of 16 diptychs, pairing the artist's family with ancient Egyptian imagery of Nefertiti and her relations. Weaving together narratives that connect personal stories with past events, the work presents both families—one ancient and royal, one modern and descended from slaves—as products of shared forces of migration and hybridization.

Cutting Out CONYT returns to O'Grady's 1977 work, *Cutting Out The New York Times* (CONYT), which consists of 26 found newspaper poems made between June 5 and November 20, 1977 from successive editions of the *Sunday Times*. Building on the 1977 series' successful transformation of public language into private, in *Cutting Out CONYT*, O'Grady repurposes the collages to achieve a failed goal of the original work: the creation of what she terms "counter-confessional" poetry. *Cutting Out CONYT* culls the poems and reshapes the remains into 26 new works that adopt a form the artist refers to as "haiku diptychs." Each of the haiku takes as its source a single 1977 poem. By concentrating and refining the original series' voice, *Cutting Out CONYT* serves as a bridge between O'Grady's early and later works. As she explains, "Making it has allowed me to maintain the tensions between my more explicit voice and my less explicit voice in a way that feels fruitful to me."



Cutting Out CONYT 02, 1977/2017, letterpress printing on Japanese paper, cut-out, collage on laid paper, diptych, each: 41.75h x 30w in, overall: 41.75h x 60w in



Cutting Out CONYT 17, 1977/2017, letterpress printing on Japanese paper, cut-out, collage on laid paper, diptych, each: 41.75h x 30w in, overall: 41.75h x 60w in

Frank Bowling

Frank Bowling OBE, RA (b. 1934) was born in British Guiana and maintains studios in London and New York. For over five decades, his distinct painting practice has been defined by an integration of autobiography and postcolonial geopolitics into abstraction.

Bowling moved to London in 1953, where he studied painting at the Royal College of Art from 1959–62. Emerging at the height of the British Pop movement, his early practice emphasized the figure while experimenting with expressive gestural applications of oil paint. In 1966, he moved to New York to immerse himself in Post-War American Art, and his practice shifted towards abstraction. As the art historian Mel Gooding remarked “for Bowling, the complexities and complications of New York art were compounded by the problematic issues of personal expression and public representation that much occupied the thoughts and discussions of his Black friends and associates in a largely segregated art world.” It was in this environment that he became a unifying force for his peers— he curated the seminal 1969 exhibition *5+1*, which featured work by Melvin Edwards, Al Loving, Jack Whitten, William T. Williams, Daniel LaRue Johnson, and himself. He was also a frequent contributor to publications, including *Arts Magazine*, where he was a contributing editor and wrote incisive texts on race and artistic production. His long friendship and intellectual sparring sessions with the renowned art historian and critic Clement Greenberg opened up further conversations about painting and politics.

Concurrent with his move towards abstraction, Bowling sought inventive ways in which to continue incorporating pictorial imagery into his work. In 1964, the artist began screen-printing personal photographs onto canvas, notably a 1953 image of his mother’s general store in Guiana, Bowling’s *Variety Store*. He would go on to create a number of these works in the following years, embedding personal narratives into the surface of his paintings. Subsequently, Bowling began his groundbreaking series of *Map Paintings* (1967–71). In these expansive, chromatic canvases, thin soaks of acrylic provide the ground for images of re-oriented continental landmasses spray-painted with stencils. As the curator Okwui Enwezor explains, “by staking a ground around the idea that abstraction need not be disunited from content, especially as it intersects cultural experience and historical subject matter, Bowling boldly experimented with diverse modes of building a painted surface.”

Since 1971, Bowling has abandoned his use of figurative imagery, and focused primarily on material and process. In place of the earlier map formations, geometry provides the foundation for his compositions. He begins with swathes of color and applies gestural drips overtop, harnessing multiple techniques to create dynamic, yet unified surfaces. In this way, he inherits and interprets the multifaceted legacy of American abstraction— both gesture and field. His palette is vibrant and diverse, fluctuating between warm saturated tones and soft pastel hues, muddied textures and sometimes shimmering surfaces.



If not now when? - 2017 False Start - 2013, 2007–2017, acrylic on paper, 29.84h x 21.93w in (75.80h x 55.70w cm)

Luis Camnitzer

Luis Camnitzer (b.1937) is a German-born Uruguayan artist and writer who moved to New York in 1964. He was at the vanguard of 1960s Conceptualism, working primarily in printmaking, sculpture, and installations. Camnitzer's artwork explores subjects such as repression under systems of power, pedagogical norms, and the deconstruction of familiar frameworks. His humorous, biting, and often politically charged use of language as art medium has distinguished his practice for over four decades.

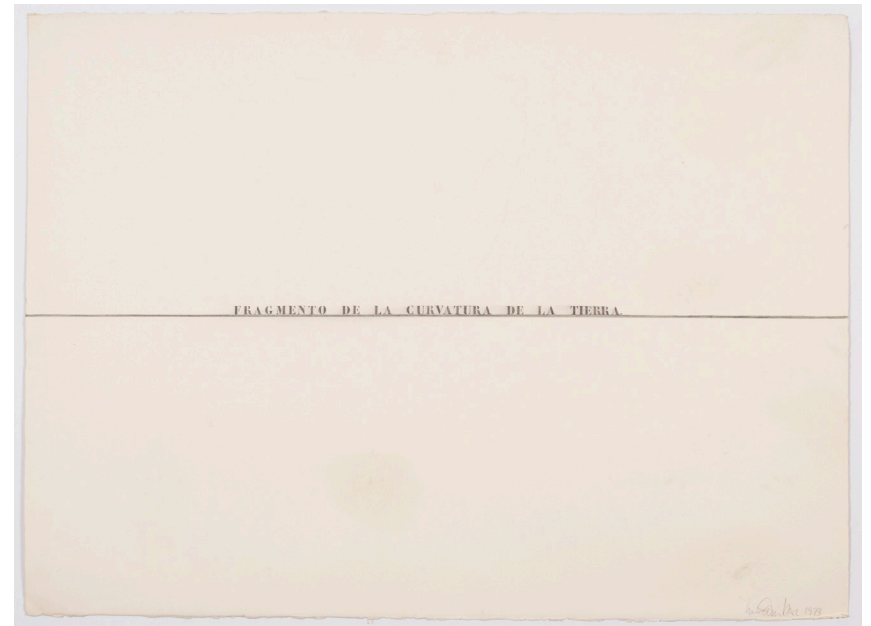
In 1964 he co-founded The New York Graphic Workshop, along with fellow artists, Argentine Liliana Porter and Venezuelan José Guillermo Castillo (1941–1999). For six years until the end of the workshop in 1970, they examined the conceptual meaning behind printmaking, and sought to test and expand the definition of the medium. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Camnitzer developed a body of work that explored language as primary medium, shifting from printing text on paper or walls, such as his Dictionary etchings and the room-size installation, *Living Room* (both 1969). As his interest in language unfolded, so did his aim to identify socio-political problems through his art. Camnitzer responded in great part to the growing wave of Latin American military regimes taking root in the late '60s, but his work also points to the dynamic political landscape of his adopted country, the United States.

During the 1970s, Camnitzer created a key body of work that blended both language and humor—producing a series of object-boxes that placed ordinary items within wood-framed glass boxes with text printed on brass plaques. In all cases, the printed sentences are also the works' titles. In many ways, these boxes anticipate one of Camnitzer's most important works, the *Uruguayan Torture Series* (1983–84). Though Camnitzer never left New York, his practice remains intrinsically connected to his homeland and the whole of Latin America. This consistent dedication cements his place as a key figure in shaping debates around ideas of post-Colonialism, Conceptualism, and pedagogy.

Camnitzer's work has been shown at important institutions since the 1960s, including one-person exhibitions at El Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, Santiago, Chile (2013); Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, MO (2011); El Museo del Barrio, New York (1995); Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City (1993); and List Visual Arts Center at M.I.T., Cambridge, MA (1991). Retrospectives of his work have been presented at Lehman College Art Gallery in the Bronx, New York (1991); Kunsthalle Kiel, Germany (2003); Daros Museum in Zurich, Switzerland, El Museo del Barrio, New York; Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Bogota, Colombia (2010–13); and a large-scale retrospective at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (2019). Camnitzer's work is in the permanent collections of Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Tate, London; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich; among others.



Telescope, 1967/1990, engraved glass, 4h x 16w x 2.30d in (10.16h x 40.64w x 5.84d cm)



Fragmento de la Curvatura de la Tierra, 1973, graphite on paper, 22h x 36w in (55.88h x 91.44w cm)

Harmony Hammond

Harmony Hammond (b.1944) was a leading figure in the development of the feminist art movement in New York in the early 1970s. She attended the University of Minnesota from 1963–67, before moving to New York in 1969. She was a co-founder of A.I.R., the first women's cooperative art gallery in New York (1972) and *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art & Politics* (1976). Since 1984, Hammond has lived and worked in northern New Mexico, teaching at the University of Arizona, Tucson from 1989–2006. Hammond's earliest feminist work combined gender politics with post-minimal concerns of materials and process, frequently occupying a space between painting and sculpture.

For years, she worked with found and repurposed materials and objects such as rags, straw, latex rubber, hair, linoleum, roofing tin, and burnt wood as well as buckets, gutters and water troughs as a means to introduce content into the world of abstraction. Hammond's near-monochrome paintings of the last decade, including *Chenille #1* (2016–17), participate in the narrative of modernist abstraction at the same time as they insist on an oppositional discourse of feminist and queer content. Their focus on materiality and the indexical, suggesting topographies of body and place, derives from and remains in conversation with, her feminist work of the 1970s. A second ongoing series of overtly political work in various media ranging from bronze sculpture to digital prints, deals with issues of intolerance, censorship and self-censorship.

Hammond's five career survey is currently on view at The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, CT. Hammond's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in venues such as Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, Austria (2016); Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Germany (2015); RedLine Art Space, Denver, CO (2014); MoMA PS1, New York (2008); Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada (2008); Neue Galerie, Graz, Austria (2007); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2007); SITE Santa Fe, NM (2002); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (1996); Brooklyn Museum, New York (1985); New Museum, New York (1982), Downtown Whitney Museum, New York (1978), Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, MN (1968); among others. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Brooklyn Museum, NY; Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Phoenix Art Museum, AZ; New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe; and the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, among others. She has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim, Joan Mitchell, Pollock-Krasner, Esther and Adolph Gottlieb and Art Matters Foundations, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others. Hammond's book, *Wrappings: Essays on Feminism, Art and the Martial Arts*, (TSL Press, 1984) is considered a seminal publication on 1970's Feminist art. Her groundbreaking book *Lesbian Art in America: A Contemporary History* (Rizzoli, 2000) received a Lambda Literary Award, and remains the primary text on the subject. In 2013, Hammond was honored with The College Art Association Distinguished Feminist Award. She received both the College Art Association's Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award and Anonymous was a Woman Award in 2014. In 2016, the Getty Research Institute acquired Hammond's archive.



Rim Series #2, 2011, monotype on paper, 13h x 10.5w in (33.02h x 26.67w cm)

Ricardo Brey

Ricardo Brey was born in Havana, Cuba in 1955 and has lived and worked in Ghent, Belgium since 1990. From the late 1970s onward, Brey's practice, which spans drawing, sculpture, and installation, has focused on his research into the origins of humanity and humankind's place in the world.

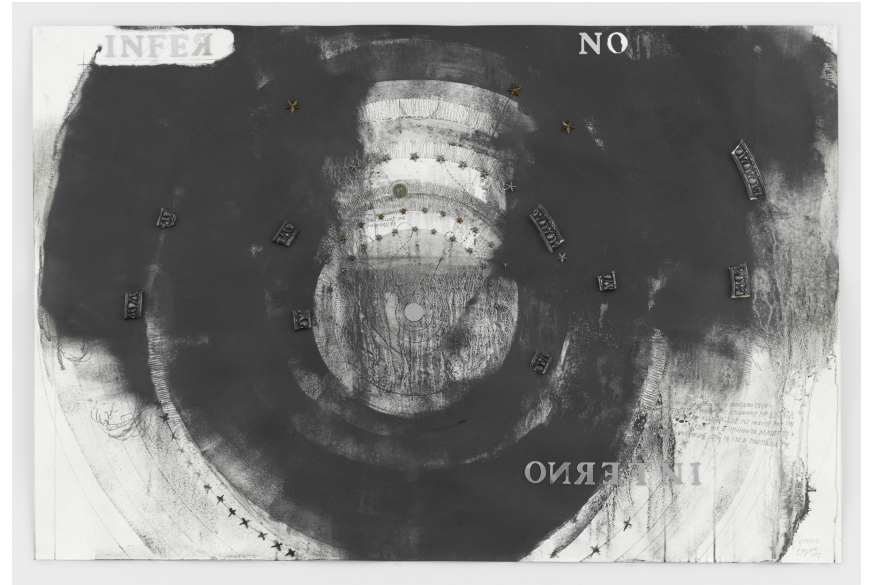
A child during the Cuban Revolution, Brey was educated at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas San Alejandro (1970–1974) and the Escuela Nacional de Arte in Havana (1974–1978), at the time the best art school in Cuba. After graduating, he joined a dynamic artistic scene in Havana that included Cuban and international artists who were committed to advancing artistic practice in Cuba. Brey worked briefly as an illustrator and graphic designer before exhibiting in the landmark 1981 group show *Volumen I* at the Centro de Arte Internacional in Havana.

Volumen I brought Brey widespread critical attention and ultimately provided him with the opportunity to travel and exhibit internationally. As the 1980s progressed, he continued to refine his interest in history and myth. Mining both the legacies of colonialism in Latin America and Afro-Cuban traditions, Brey produced a rich body of work that ranged from faux historical documents drafted by explorers and naturalists to Santería-influenced sculptures and installations. In 1992, at the invitation of the Belgian curator Jan Hoet, he participated in *Documenta IX*—the first Cuban artist to do so. Brey's installation for *Documenta* consisted of a series of objects, including old Venetian blinds, mattresses, panes of glass, and an electric fan, and represented a new stage in his artistic development. Moving away from the handmade Afro-Cuban objects that typified his late 1980s work, Brey began to create his own hybrid transcultural myths through the juxtaposition of disparate readymades.

During the 1990s, Ricardo Brey continued to refine this approach to sculpture and installation, harnessing the associative potential of objects to suggest a narrative. For example, Brey used tires to construct installations that serve as meditations on transience and exile—the tires' forms referencing the tire rafts built by Cuban refugees to cross the Florida Strait. Since 2000, Brey has experimented with vitrine installations, producing works like *Universe* (2002–2003), consisting of 1,004 drawings illustrating an "entire" universe—including every bird, fish, insect, and plant—its ongoing supplement *Annex*, and *Every life is a fire* (2009–2015), a series of intricate boxes that unfold to reveal books, drawings, sculptures, and performative proposals. These recent works, like Brey's earlier fantastical historical documents, reveal the artist's decades-long inquiry into how humans understand and categorize reality and themselves. As Brey states, "What fascinates me is the origin of the human race, our culture and our society. It is from the relationship between different life forms and between the communities of earlier and today that we can deduce the state of the present world. We can learn from our evolutionary past and thus consider our current condition critically. From a global approach man can emphasize the underlying connection between everything around us."



Polen, 2016, mixed media on board, 19.69h x 27.56w x 2.36d in (50h x 70w x 6d cm)



Above: *Inferno*, 2017, mixed media on paper, 28.74h x 43.31w in (73h x 110w cm)
Left: detail

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Printing: Puritan Capital

Through exhibitions, research, and artist representation, the Alexander Gray Associates spotlights artistic movements and artists who emerged in the mid- to late-Twentieth Century. Influential in cultural, social, and political spheres, these artists are notable for creating work that crosses geographic borders, generational contexts and artistic disciplines. Alexander Gray Associates is a member of the Art Dealers Association of America.

About SP-Arte

SP-Arte – São Paulo International Art Festival – constitutes a dynamic platform for a cultural and artistic exchange between curators, collectors, artists, galleries, works and admirers of art. As such, it stands as the translator of the current, the new and of the already established production, in addition to promoting the professionalization of Brazil's creative market. During the event, modern and contemporary art are the center of attention of debates and creations scattered throughout the city of São Paulo.

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