

# THE OLYMPIA PROJECT



Online Exclusive Exhibition  
Artsy Viewing Room

October 2 - November 14, 2020  
October 2 - 23, 2020

#matterofthemind | #TOPcuratedby | #theolympiaproject | #artfulcollecting

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Olympia Project is pleased to present [Matter of the Mind](#), the second exhibition in our **CURATED BY** series. Leveraging our digital and physical platforms, we seek to provide space for curators and artists globally to explore new relationships, artistic conversations, and markets. In the midst of global political upheaval coupled with a pandemic that is radically altering the way we consider borders and exchange, it is more important than ever to provide space for artistic, intellectual, and cultural dialogue.

Curated by Stephanie Ferguson Villalón, *Matter of the Mind* features works by Raúl Cordero, Glenda León, Alejandro Piñeiro, Florencio Gelabert, Alejandro González, Juan Carlos Alom, Liz Capote, Ariamna Contino, Jorge Otero, Mari Claudia García, José Manuel Mesías, and José Yaque.

Constantly reinventing and pushing themselves and their practice, these artists use creation to make sense of the world around them; through their work they reflect on their past, sift through the present and reach within themselves in their search for meaning. **Glenda León, José Mesías, and José Yaque** expose the beauty, magic and mystery of daily life that so often goes unseen/unrecognized/unnoticed. **Raúl Cordero, Alejandro González, Mari Claudia García and Jorge Otero** frame the world in a way that opens our eyes to the infinite facets of the truth. **Florencio Gelabert, Liz Capote and Ariamna Contino** reference the hidden violence and burdens we bear, while **Alejandro Piñeiro and Juan Carlos Alom** free themselves from the common compulsion and desire to make sense of it all.

While the world is learning to adjust to a “new normal” now that reality as we know it has been turned on its head, we find ourselves searching for answers, scouring our recollections of history, reflecting on memories, delving into our imaginations, grasping for understanding, for meaning.

The featured works are investigations in human nature, where the artists attempt to expose patterns that help them make sense of the world we live in, works through which they acknowledge and challenge the limitations of the human mind. These artists probe their own views of the world, play with perspective, challenge the dominant narratives, and flip our assumptions to reveal the complex underbelly of our perceived reality.

Collectively, these artists probe the recesses within, simultaneously challenging and celebrating the matter of the human mind.

- Stephanie Ferguson Villalón, Curator

For press or other inquiries, please contact Sophie Riese at [art@sophieolympia.com](mailto:art@sophieolympia.com).

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## About the curator:

**Stephanie Ferguson Villalón** (@artfulcollecting) is an art advisor and collector living between Havana and Miami. She holds a Master's Degree in Art History from the University of Havana, with a concentration in Cuban Art. She is the founder of Artful Collecting, an advisory platform committed to making contemporary Cuban art more accessible to collectors around the world, focused on supporting the careers of emerging and mid-career artists on the island.

## About the artists:

**Raul Cordero** (@raul\_cordero\_studio) [b. 1971, Cuba] creates large paintings on canvas, and installations that invite us to pause and take the time to decipher the meaning of their blurry images and cryptic text, a commentary in itself on distracted society today. He revisits certain content again and again, mocking our obsession with the new and the novel, our addiction to constant consumption.

**Glenda León** (@glendaleon.estudio) [b. 1976, Cuba] transcends the everyday in her drawings, video art, installations and photography, exposing the magic in the ordinary. Her work examines the relationship between the man-made and the natural, explores the visible and the invisible, the ephemeral and eternal.

**Alejandro Piñeiro Bello** (@alejandropineirobello) [b. 1990, Cuba] is known for his painting, sculpture, installations, as well as video and virtual reality art. He simplifies the process of remembering and frees himself from the common compulsion and desire to make sense of the past.

**Florencio Gelabert** (@florenciogelabert) [b. 1961, Cuba] recontextualizes and re-constructs the "natural" in his work, using man-made materials in his sculptures and installations through which he processes his version of history. His work often embodies feelings of nostalgia, emblematic of the architecture of ruins. Recurring themes in his work include loss of identity, loneliness, violence, displacement, nostalgia and tragedy brought on by nature or man.

**Alejandro González Méndez** (@alejandrogonzalezmendez) [b. 1976, Cuba] has documented daily life in Cuba since 2005. More recently he has delved into portrait and landscape photography. Through his work, Gonzalez attempts to expose truths about human nature or society, to provoke and preserve "a kind of mythology: the photographic truth of the world such as it is now", according to the artist.

**Juan Carlos Alom** (@juancarlosalom) [b. 1964, Cuba], is a photographer and filmmaker whose unmistakable personal voice and eye artfully reflects collective concerns. Alom incorporates elements of ritual, magical realism, and Afro-Cuban religion, in documenting the mystery and complexity of a people accustomed to the multiple layers of reality on the island.

**Liz Capote Alonso** (@liz\_capote) [b. 1996, Cuba] works within the tradition of Cuban silkscreen printing, a practice known as collography. Cuban poster production in the '50s and '60s evolved from the lithographic process pioneered by the French. Silk screening in Cuba involves layers of paint, rather than ink, to create images that resemble a painting more than a lithograph.

**Ariamna Contino** (@ariamnacontino) [b. 1984, Cuba] is known for her elegant paper art loaded with socially critical subject matter. Her monochrome works are profoundly complex in concept, style and form. Her work exudes "an evidently refined beauty, a dazzling handling of the technique" (NG Art Gallery). Contino is also known for her installations and public artworks that not only comment on social realities, but play a role in altering them.

**Jorge Otero** (@jorgeoterothotos) [b. 1982, Cuba] is a photographer whose practice focuses on the representation of the human body. The male torso, in particular, is a focal point in much of his work. Otero often incorporates weaving, manufacturing practices, and other crafts strongly associated with popular culture in his art, breaking down the barrier between "high culture" and the fine arts, and popular culture and the general public.

**Mari Claudia García** (@mclaudiagr75) [b. 1989, Cuba] is known for her highly conceptual sculpture, installations and video art that reveals psychological truths and comments on both the strength and fragility of human nature.

**José Manuel Mesías** (@mesiasjosemanuel) [b.1990, Cuba] large-format paintings, expressionist portraits, and small textural objects portray both the marvel and anxiety the artist experiences in his everyday life. His detailed observations of objects, spaces and people exude silence and mystery. They are explorations of the unknown.

**José Yaque** (@matyaque) [b.1985, Cuba] creates lush canvases that resemble molten rock, layers of the earth's crust, or even aerial views of a landscape. His technique involves mixing and applying paint thickly with his hands, then he covers the canvas in plastic before slowly maneuvering the sheet across the surface creating a rippled effect reminiscent of the movement of water or the texture of the earth's surface.