SUMMER 2021 INTERNATIONAL ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE EXHIBITIONS RECALL AMERICA’S TROUBLED HISTORY WITH HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Media Preview: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 | 10:30–11:30am at Artpace
Opening Reception: Thursday, July 15, 2021 | 6–9pm at Artpace
In Residence: May 24–July 19, 2021
Exhibitions on View: July 15–September 05, 2021

(San Antonio, Texas, 7/13/21)—Artpace is thrilled to welcome the public back to its galleries with the opening of three new exhibitions by the Summer 2021 International Artists-in-Residence. Iván Argote (Paris, France/Bogotá, Colombia), Nao Bustamante (Los Angeles, California), and Michael Menchaca (San Antonio, Texas), who will present their exhibitions at an opening reception on Thursday, July 15 from 6–9pm. Join the artists in a conversation with guest curator Pilar Tompkins Rivas at 6:30pm, followed by a performance by Nao Bustamante at 8pm.

With the removal of many colonizer statues across the globe, Iván Argote’s exhibition All Here Together contemplates a world where community
members are given the recognition and importance often allotted to statues of historical and problematic figures. “Public space is not always gentle to the public,” Argote told Artpace, reminding us that the areas meant for public use are rarely democratic and often represent a specific legacy. Created with sketch-like strokes of black paint, the gallery walls are covered in a mural with a faceless statue descending from his plinth. In the center of the gallery, a large pedestal is open to public use with the hopes of motivating visitors to become a part of the installation. Embedded into the treads of the sculpture, the words DEAR WE ARE ALL HERE TOGETHER THIS IS A PLACE FOR US welcomes participants. Argote’s exhibition encourages viewers to imagine the possibilities of communal spaces and become a part of the conversation to get there.

*BLOOM* by Nao Bustamante investigates the dark history of women’s gynecological medicine and the lack of autonomy that has followed women into the 21st century. Rooted in both research and object-making, the idea for *BLOOM*, a new speculum design that inspires the exhibition title, came into her mind fully formed, shortly after a pelvic exam in 2011. “Like many women, I wondered why the medical industry cannot create a more comfortable apparatus for such basic procedures. I’ve often skipped the annual event out of my own avoidance of discomfort,” said Bustamante about the speculum. Based on the design of an opening flower, with several flexible, curved petals in a thin condom-like sheath, *BLOOM*, the speculum, is at the heart of this exhibition. Preliminary drawings of *BLOOM* are on view in the gallery alongside work that conceptually explores a pelvic examination. A levitating gynecological table from the mid 1800s pays tribute to the enslaved women Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey (victims of early gynecological experiments. Also on view will be community ceramic pieces from a workshop accessing the “vaginal imaginary,” a display of speculums currently used in the medical field, the premiere of a video installation taking the spectator into the “vagnasium,” and a performance on opening night.

Texas native, Michael Menchaca’s exhibition *The 1836 Project (Extended Widescreen Edition)* expands on the colonial fantasies of the Texas creation myth with his newest video work. During his time at Artpace, Menchaca has developed his personalized lexicon to include figures and symbols culturally specific to Texas history and its racist tropes. These figures are the central component of the animated scenes that are projected across all the gallery walls. The five-channel video projection and deep rhythmic soundtrack creates a space of somber contemplation allowing visitors the time and space to re-examine Texas history and the way people and institutions have tied a false narrative to symbols like The Alamo, in the hopes of encouraging public dialogue. This exhibition has a timely resonance as the nation debates over
the inclusion of critical race theory in schools and scholars’ work to dispel myths surrounding historical figures and sites.

Artpace is committed to providing a platform where artists can express their experiences through thought-provoking exhibitions and providing a safe place for these diverse perspectives to be explored. The three Summer 2021 International Artists-in-Residence Argote, Bustamante, and Menchaca each explore contemporary injustices by analyzing their history with the hope of sparking much-needed dialogue. Artpace encourages audiences to engage in these dialogues and powerful exhibitions, which will be on view from July 15–September 5, 2021.

###

Program Sponsors
Artpace’s Summer 2021 International Artist-in-Residence program is made possible with the support of the Linda Pace Foundation and the National Endowment of the Arts. Iván Argote’s Artpace project was also supported by an Étant Donnés Contemporary Art Grant from the FACE Foundation.

Artpace Sponsors
Artpace is generously supported by the City of San Antonio Department of Arts & Culture, the John L Santikos Charitable Foundation of the San Antonio Area Foundation, the Brown Foundation, Inc., the Texas Commission on the Arts, and the Harris & Eliza Kempner Fund.

About Artpace
Artpace San Antonio is a nonprofit residency program which supports regional, national, and international artists in the creation of new art. As a catalyst for artistic expression, we engage local communities with global art practices and experiences. To date, Artpace has welcomed over 257 artists through its renowned International Artist-in-Residence program. Annually, Artpace hosts three residencies. Each feature one Texas-based artist, one national artist, and one international artist, who are selected by a notable guest curator. Each eight-week residency culminates in a two-month exhibition on site. The mission of this program is to provide artists with unparalleled resources that allow them to experiment with new ideas and take provocative risks. www.artpace.org.