

**THE BONNIER GALLERY PRESENTS ANNUAL MFA SHOWCASE
EXHIBITION**

— *Opening May 13, Bonnier's newest show will feature original works by select MFA graduate students from FIU, UM, and MIU, and a collaboration with The55Project* —

MIAMI – May 13, 2023 – **The Bonnier Gallery** is delighted to present ***The MFA Showcase: Year 2***, featuring select works by MFA graduate students from the **University of Miami, Florida International University**, and a special collaboration between **Miami International University of Art & Design** and **The55Project**. The exhibition opens Saturday, May 13, with a reception from 6-9pm. On view through May 13 - July 29, 2023. Free and open to the public.

The artists include four from the University of Miami: Zuyi Jin, Alián Rives, Lucas Varnum, and Alyssa Wood; four from Florida International University: Lucia Morales, Pedro Sena, Melina Tsalikis, Chantae Elaine Wright; and one from Miami International University of Art & Design, selected by The55Project: Bella Cardim.

The show will include a curatorial text by Jennifer Inacio.

Adhering to the gallery's dedication to local educational institutions as well as providing a platform for local students to enter the gallery space, *The MFA Showcase* is a staple of the The Bonnier Gallery's programming every summer.

For more information please call (305) 960-7850, email info@thebonniergallery.com, or visit thebonniergallery.com.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Bella Cardim, a Brazilian artist presented with The55Project, uncovers the hidden narratives that lie beneath the surface of her eating behaviors, exploring the ways in which her cultural, personal, and emotional histories shape her relationship with food and body image. Using various media to explore these

themes, she intends to create a powerful connection with viewers, inviting them to reflect on their own experiences and engage with the deeper meanings behind our relationship with food, our bodies, our emotions, and identities.

Zuyi Jin is a painter and illustrator from Lanzhou, China. His work reflects the journey he took from small town to megacity to new country, and how his imagination evolved as his worldview expanded. Turning points are intertwined as Jin's life forms move through space and time in his painting.

Lucia Morales presents *Mantas*, an installation using the traditional cloth from several regions of the Peruvian Andes. Mantas transport babies, sustenance, flowers, crops, and traditions. The mantas here are held together with safety pins allowing them to shift and grow, like the women they represent and the communities that they hold together. While they celebrate the ideas of abundance, tradition, and nature, these mantas also speak to immigration and the weight that these women carry on their backs as they struggle to provide for their loved ones.

Alián Rives photographic series *Negative Space* is composed of sky photographs taken from 6:00 to 7:00pm. In the outer frame of each serene blue swatch however, is the portrait, name, and life span of a child who was victim on the "13 de Marzo," a boat that was sunk by the Cuban coast guard in 1994 to prevent those onboard from escaping the island.

Pedro Sena's drawings contort and fuse sharply rendered human figures to convey movement in a static format. He explores the multiple psychological dispositions that our physical bodies can express and how they often contradict or reaffirm each other.

Melina Tsalikis explores her longing and questioning for cultural connection on her father's Greek side. In her installation, *Hey Dad (Tzatziki)*, plaster replicates dripping tzatziki, as both materials drip in preparation to be ready. Found bowls, kitchen cabinet handles, and her mother's dishcloths are manipulated as visual texture.

THE BONNIER GALLERY — INC.

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Lucas Varnum's sculptures purposefully make the viewer uncomfortable. His body of work explores different insecurities and their impact on his life. Embarrassment from going to the bathroom and eating in public take on biomorphic forms made out of clay.

In her art, **Alyssa Wood** uses roadkill that she has sewn into taxidermy as representations of the human form to stimulate discussion about feminist politics of the body. As she takes these creatures apart and sews them back together, they are forced to perform different roles captured via stop motion clips. She finds parallel between her work molding these creatures and the ways in which people are forced to mold themselves to set roles that society has carved out for them.

Chantae Elaine Wright's paintings revolve around themes of disidentification and polymorphism, i.e., otherness existing outside of social norms. Wright's relation to both the female and male gaze, as a queer female artist, inform the imagery she creates, particularly taking back the narrative of the female gaze.

ABOUT THE55PROJECT

The55Project is a non-profit organization with the mission to increase the visibility of Brazilian visual artists through a calendar of events including solo projects, collective exhibitions, residences, public art, talks, and educational programs designed to create opportunities for a dialogue between artists and local communities.

ABOUT THE BONNIER GALLERY

The Bonnier Gallery Inc. is an international commercial art gallery dealing in primary and secondary market works with a principal focus in minimalist and conceptual art including, though not limited to, painting, photography, sculpture, and mixed media, as well as publications of art and poetry. Through unique exhibitions, American and European art fairs, and scholarly catalogues, we seek to place our artists' work in a wide range of international private and museum collections. We also seek to promote the visual arts and literary arts in our community by contributing to local educational efforts and providing a public space that fosters a dialogue between artists and poets.