

All That You Have Is Your Soul
Curated by Meyken Barreto and Armando Marino

FACTION @ Gallery 8 NY
2602 Frederick Douglass Boulevard
NY 10030

February 2nd to March 10th, 2018
Private View February 1st 6.30-9.30pm

FACTION's inaugural New York project celebrates the building of identity from a common heritage within a community engaging Harlem exhibition.

FACTION Art Projects presents their inaugural exhibition, *All That You Have Is Your Soul*, a group show of 17 artists, all of whom are tied together by their responses to building identity within a foreign land. The exhibition uses the link of heritage between the artists to present artworks that celebrate difference in identity.

Artists from disparate generations and with diverse histories come together to create a community through the narratives of their art. *All That You Have Is Your Soul* presents a microcosm of the wider global community, one that attempts autonomy from social constraints and looks beyond the boundaries of borders and political divisions to focus and celebrate the individuality of the human soul.

Each artist in the show has some relationship to Cuba, some island-born emigres, some with careers developed in Cuba and others with more distant descendance. This starting point, a key point of identity for some, but not for others, offers a tangible bond in their linked roots, but the overriding premise is that as a group they mean to redefine themselves within their unique circumstance.

Exhibitions on Cuban art thus far have tended to establish borders and define their subject through polarization: generations, inside/outside, national/foreign, made in the Island versus created elsewhere. In a world of fusing boundaries and erased frontiers, is there a need to be defined by these terms? The claim of "Cubanidad" for contemporary art has become in most of the cases an artificial construction that complies with commercial, institutional or political interests.

All That You Have Is Your Soul on the contrary, invites participants to express their own opinions on what it means, fundamentally to be an artist. The struggle of being of an artist, regardless of background, is visible in the physical manifestations of their practice. Inevitably, each perspective is different, and it is only through this that we can truly begin to comprehend the complexity of human creativity.

Armando Marino, Co-curator and artist exhibiting in the show says: "I wanted to add my story of what it means to be an artist, in spite of what I was born, to those of others, seeking to demonstrate that although we have our roots in the same place, every story is truly unique. *All That You Have Is Your Soul* offers an insight into the distinct ways in which artists have rebuilt their identities, and reimagined themselves within new environments."

Curating alongside Armando Marino is Meyken Barreto, who says: "This exhibition bets on the understanding of identity as an open and liquid concept, which is constantly redefined and enriched.

The artists gathered here come from different circumstances and their work departs from very diverse premises. With this exhibition we want to subtract weight from the well-worn "Cuban Art" label, and in a way relativize or undermine this notion."

Notable artists include Ernesto Pujol (Havana, Cuba 1957), a site-specific performance artist, social choreographer, and educator with an interdisciplinary practice, Alejandro Aguilera (Holguin, Cuba 1964) who creates abstract work with strong references to his recent memories of Cuba, Anthony Goicolea (Atlanta, Georgia 1971) a multidisciplinary artist who draws on themes from personal history and identity, to cultural tradition, alienation and displacement, Maria Magdalena Campos Pons (La Vega, Cuba 1959) with autobiographical work investigating themes of history, memory, gender and religion and how they inform identity and Juana Valdes (Pinar Del Rio, Cuba 1963) whose work explores current migration processes and critiques race, gender, and mobility.

A central theme for the show is the celebration of diversity. The artists involved are of a variety of ages, genders, sexualities and races. The location of Harlem, New York is significant as a place that is thriving with a culturally diverse community. Its rich mix of people make it a platform from which to embrace difference, without preconceived notions of race and culture. The show does not present the artificially conceptualized "national art". The artists here reunited do belong in a certain kind of nation, but it is an expanded and infinite one; the contemporary nation of the Art World.

Throughout the show FACTION will seek to engage with local communities of the Harlem neighborhood. This will include a series of School Workshops, Curators' Talks, a Family Opening, Artist Workshops, Panel Discussions and a Cuban Cultural Evening. Speakers include: Joaquin Badajoz, Ernesto Mendez Conde, Meyken Barreto and Juana Valdez.

FACTION is a new flexible collective, from the team behind the hugely successful Gallery 8 and Coates & Scarry in London, who in this, their foray into the US, are adapting a unique model for artists and gallerists to work together.

FACTION is a well needed response to the changing market place and the erosion of the traditional art market, where galleries were gatekeepers for artists. FACTION aims to reimagine these relationships through unique collaborative projects, curated either by the team themselves, or by talented guest curators such as with *All That You Have Is Your Soul*. FACTION provides artists with promotion and opportunity to access collectors and a wider audience, with all the support of a gallery but without the constraints of the traditional model.

For more information please contact Anna Beketov, Damson PR at anna.beketov@damsonpr.com or +44 (0)20 7812 0645.

Notes to editors:

Artists:

Alejandro Aguilera, Anthony Goicolea, Armando Mariño, Ariel Cabrera Montejó, Elsa Mora, Enrique De Molina Ernesto Pujol, Geandy Pavon, Jairo Alfonso, Juan Carlos Quintana, Juan Miguel Pozo, Juana Valdes Maria Magdalena Campos Pons, Marc Dennis, Maritsa Molina, Marta Maria Perez, Pavel Acosta, Quisqueya Enriquez

FACTION is a team of three partners - Celine Gauld, Richard Scarry and Dean Coates - each coming to the art world with unique experience and skill sets.

Celine Gauld has a background in art history, and 20 years' experience running art galleries in central London.

Richard Scarry has over 15 years' experience working at auction houses, not for profit and contemporary galleries in Los Angeles. Having relocated to the UK, he became a founding partner of Coates and Scarry in 2011.

Dean Coates is a practising artist and academic and holds a Masters Degree in Ceramics. He has many years' experience working in education and with community arts groups.

Armando Mariño was born in Cuba and now lives and works in New York. He studied art in Havana and Santiago de Cuba in the 1980s and 1990s, and at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam between 2004 and 2005. He has since exhibited his paintings all over the world including solo and group exhibitions in Paris, Ontario, Copenhagen, Madrid and Miami among other cities. Mariño has won numerous awards for his paintings and his work is held in such notable collections as that of Deutsche Bank, De Nederlandsche Bank, The Coca Cola Foundation and other significant public and private collections in Europe, Central America and the USA.

Meyken Barreto is an art writer and curator. She has work as Regional Director, Gallery Manager, Studio Manager and Art History professor. She has curated several exhibitions in Cuba, Spain and the US. She currently contributes to various art publications.