

MAUREEN PALEY.

press release

FELIPE BAEZA

15 November 2018 - 06 January 2019

private view: Thursday 15 November 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Maureen Paley is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition in the UK by Felipe Baeza. The work presented at the gallery explores ideas surrounding his interest in migration, queerness, and anthropology through the use of both collage and printmaking. The work also derives from a wide spectrum of sources that address concepts of regeneration from Maya mythology to contemporary literary texts by Edwidge Danticat and Gloria Anzaldua.

"... Primarily working on paper and incorporating different techniques via collage and decollage, I aim to render visible those bodies and histories that have been rendered invisible and have disappeared. In making the invisible visible and vice versa I aim to challenge those notions that keep people in the margins. My work is concerned with the body as praxis and the possibilities of creating subjects that seek to reveal their complexities. I also utilise my own biography to reflect on my personal experiences and explore the persistent effects of social institutions and cultural practices on the individual. I use this strategy to imagine structures and possibilities for the self-emancipation of the hybrid-fugitive body that is persistently susceptible to hostile conditions. The possibility of self-emancipation is forged by the necessity to survive and thrive, wherein one is forced to create new forms and structures which produce liminal spaces of belonging. The work exists between a real and imaginary space of life, death, and transformation that lives beyond borders and boundaries; while also offering the viewer a return to places, histories and visions of the past that might otherwise be forgotten.

In these pieces I exploit collage and printmaking elements to show how the body undergoes fragmentation or is pulled apart and dismembered, then reconstructed. This leads to questions I present such as how one honours those who are no longer with us and have disappeared in the process of migrating for a better life. This has been part of a series inspired by Drexciya and Afrofuturist myth. Drexciya was an underwater nation populated by African people and their unborn children who were thrown off of slave ships during the middle passage. Those individuals developed gills in order to survive. My work makes us think about Drexciya as well as the many lives that have perished through forced migration, imagining those individuals still thriving through regeneration and through different forms such as plants.

The use of dark colours in these pieces derives from an interest in darkness and night that functions as an in-between space where transformation happens. "

Felipe Baeza, 2018

Felipe Baeza was born in 1987, Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico and lives and works in New York, USA. Baeza is the 2017 recipient of The Robert Schoelkopf Memorial Traveling Fellowship and The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation Traveling Fellowship. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, NY, USA in 2009, and has recently graduated as a MFA Candidate in the Painting/Printmaking program at Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT, USA. Baeza will be included in the forthcoming exhibition *Nobody Promised You Tomorrow: Contemporary Art in the 50th Year of the Stonewall Era*, Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY, USA (2019). Recent exhibitions include *XL Catlin Art Prize*, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, California, USA, travelling to Linda Warren Projects, Chicago and New York Academy of Art, New York, NY, USA, *No Longer Yours*, The Mistake Room/Anonymous Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico, *Tails*, Next to Nothing, New York, NY, USA, *Demolition WoManhood*, Skibum MacArthur, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2018); *Reconstruir*, 41 Cooper Gallery, The Cooper Union, New York, NY, USA, *New Prints 2017/Summer*, selected by Katherine Bradford, International Print Center New York, New York, NY, USA (2017) and *Carving Through Borders*, Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, CA, USA (2014).

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Gallery open: Wednesday - Sunday 11 am – 6 pm. Office hours: Monday - Friday 10 am – 6 pm