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Firelei Báez
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Organized by the Contemporary Arts Center

CINCINNATI (JAN 2018) – Identity is something we’re constantly exploring, and this May the CAC is presenting Firelei Báez: *(Firelei)* to add to the discovery. Being the first Ohio exhibition for the Caribbean-born, Brooklyn-based artist, *(Firelei)* deeply explores the broad spectrum of color, race and identity. Báez highlights the intricacies of being Afro-Latina through detailed paintings, murals, sculpture and works on paper exposed with beautiful patterns and political agency. *(Firelei)* marries a collection of works from both past and present including a new kaleidoscopic wall painting. Báez arrives at the CAC just in time, contributing to the global conversation exploring ideas around the meanings of race, gender, identity and how they relate to and push our culture forward.

“There’s a fluidity of color of race, in the Caribbean...in America, you’re black.” Báez creates magical worlds with colorful avatars in her work to, “try to disrupt the current system of social categorization through creation of characters that refuse definition. As more people become multiracial, skin tone is no longer a sufficient signifier.” Báez art combines added dimensions of anthropology, folklore, science-fiction and mythology, and shares her vision of increasingly diverse societies. *(Steven quote on why this CAC-specific exhibition is different than anything prior).*

Born in the Dominican Republic to Dominican and Haitian parents, she immigrated to the United States in 1990 and was increasingly troubled by the restraints of her ethnicity. This dual experience drives the concepts behind work and allows her to explore the complexities different cultures and the truths behind them. *(working together ending quote from Director of CAC).*