



EMB AJADA

Pablo Delano

*My Paradise is Hell*

October 11, 2025–January 17, 2026

EMB AJADA, San Juan

EMB AJADA is pleased to present artist Pablo Delano's first solo exhibition with the gallery, entitled *My Paradise is Hell*.

Delano's latest body of work expands his exploration of Puerto Rico's visual and colonial histories through a striking series of color photo-composites and assemblage sculptures created from found objects. In these new works, Delano juxtaposes vivid contemporary scenes from popular media —gleaming resorts, cruise ships, sun drenched beaches, as well as humanitarian and environmental disasters—with archival black-and-white photographs depicting moments from the island's colonial past. The resulting compositions uncover the tensions between Puerto Rico's (and the greater Caribbean's) marketed image as a tropical playground and the lingering and complex realities of imperial domination. Through this layered dialogue of images, Delano exposes how the myths of paradise and progress continue to obscure deeper histories of exploitation, displacement, and resistance.

Interwoven among these photographic works are sculptural assemblages—objects salvaged, repurposed, and recontextualized placed in conversation with each other to engage with the same themes. By placing weathered relics of everyday life alongside his composite images, Delano creates new critical narratives that blur the boundaries between artifact and art. These sculptural interventions echo the contradictions of museum display itself, inviting reflection on how objects are imbued with authority, memory, and meaning. With characteristic wit and rigor, Delano transforms image and object alike into potent tools for questioning the legacies and contradictions of colonialism that persist in Puerto Rico's contemporary landscape.

Pablo Delano was born, raised and educated in the “unincorporated” U.S. territory of Puerto Rico. He holds a B.F.A. from Tyler School of Art/Temple University and an M.F.A. from Yale University, both in painting. Living in New York in the early 1980s, he turned to photography, a skill he learned from his father, the eminent photographer Jack Delano. Pablo Delano's work has consistently documented the lives, histories and struggles of Latino/a and Caribbean communities, in their homelands and in their diasporas. After a decade photographing in Trinidad and Tobago, his fascination with that nation's process of post-colonial nation-building led to the production of his acclaimed book *In Trinidad* (2008). He has also authored *Faces of America* (1992) and *Hartford Seen* (2019). In 2019, Delano was appointed Charles A. Dana Professor of Fine Arts at Trinity College in Hartford, where he has taught since 1996. In 2024 Delano was selected by curator Adriano Pedrosa to participate in the 60th International Art Exhibition of the 2024 Venice Biennial with his ongoing project *The Museum of the Old Colony*.