

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Daniel Rios Rodriguez

Reincarnation of a Lovebird

May 5 – June 3, 2023

Opening reception Friday May 5, 6–8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Reincarnation of a Lovebird*, our third solo exhibition with San Antonio-based artist Daniel Rios Rodriguez. Across both floors of the gallery, *Reincarnation of a Lovebird* attests to personal transformation and notions of freedom through large scale paintings and works on paper.

Daniel Rios Rodriguez employs techniques of abstraction to mine the autobiographical, from dream states to the everyday. While narratively ambiguous, his mixed media paintings proffer talismanic qualities made evident by the artist's physical hand and the work's essential object-ness. Encoding discarded materials found on daily walks taken around the San Antonio river (rope, wood, rocks, and other flotsam) the artist packs his works with the color and detritus of life to create densely topographical pictorial fields. In many works, bold colors and patterns bleed off the surface of the perceivable canvas onto artist-built frames, layered appendages of wood, rope, and nails that extend and complicate the picture plane.

For Rodriguez, *Reincarnation of a Lovebird* marks a significant shift in scale, theme, and purpose in the artist's practice while continuing to incorporate the iconography of life cycles. Grounding the exhibition are three monumental paintings of eagles: stylized, stoic, and fierce in their expressionistic rendering. Akin to colossal Mesoamerican Olmec heads, the three eagles (denoting morning, noon, and night) constitute anthropomorphized self-portraits of the artist. In recent exhibitions such as *Serpentine Dream* (Kerlin Gallery, 2021) and *Semper Virens* (Nicelle Beauchene, 2020), Rodriguez's paintings were closer to earth, coursing with representations of the artist as serpent, or ouroboros, and ground kept vegetation. Moving away from tighter, intimate assemblage-style impasto paintings, here the artist loosens his compositional structures toward a freer, more gestural approach to painting.

Rodriguez further explores Mesoamerican iconography and representations of the self in *Vibras* (2023), *Virgo's Groove* (2023) and *Estudio Noche* (2023). These more sparsely rendered paintings foreground the vírgula, a spiral or comma-like form found in Aztec codices: a breath-like mote of fluidity, outward expression, and communication. In the gallery's downstairs space, a suite of graphite and charcoal works on paper present studies towards the paintings, expanding Rodriguez's lexicon of eagles-as-self.

Daniel Rios Rodriguez (b. 1978, Killeen, TX) lives and works in San Antonio, TX and received his MFA in Painting from Yale in 2007. Rodriguez has had solo exhibitions at Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2017, 2020); Cooper Cole, Toronto (2017, 2019, 2022); Kerlin Gallery, Dublin (2018, 2021); Feuilleton, Los Angeles (2020); Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL (2016, 2022); Artpace, San Antonio (2019); Lulu, Mexico City (2016); McNay Art Museum, San Antonio (2015), and White Columns, New York (2011), among others.

Group exhibitions include Various Small Fires, Dallas (2022); X Museum, Beijing (2021); Camden Arts Centre, London (2020); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019); Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX (2018); Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX (2018); Galeria Fortes D'aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo (2017); Michael Benevento, Los Angeles (2017); Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles (2016); and Roberts & Tilton Gallery, Los Angeles (2015), among numerous others.

Rodriguez was 2018 Artist in Residence at the Chianti Foundation and a 2013 recipient of the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award. His work is included in the public collection of the San Antonio Museum of Art.