



San Antonio
Museum
of Art

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San Antonio Museum of Art Acquires New Works of Latin American Contemporary Art

Museum Also Receives Gift of Five Contemporary Works from the Alex Katz Foundation

San Antonio, TX—March 3, 2020—The San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) announced today that it has acquired a number of works by contemporary Latin American artists—and that it has also received a gift of five works of contemporary art from the Alex Katz Foundation. Works by Jose Dávila, Sonia Gomes, Pedro Reyes, and Analia Saban—now on view—add to the Museum’s existing strength in contemporary Latin American art. The other five works given by the Alex Katz Foundation—pieces by Sinéad Breslin, Gaby Collins-Fernandez, Leah Durner, Keltie Ferris, and Rob Pruitt—support SAMA’s targeted growth of its contemporary art holdings and are the second grouping of works given to the Museum by the Foundation in the last two years.

“It is exciting to be able to share news about such a diverse group of contemporary art acquisitions all at once, as well as the commitment of the many donors who support us,” said William Rudolph, SAMA’s interim co-director. “It has been a historical strength of this Museum that we collect and present art that both connects directly to the diverse communities of San Antonio and that relates to the wider worlds of art and culture in the United States and beyond. These gifts and purchases support that approach and we look forward to showing off many of these pieces to our audiences in the near future.”



Contemporary Latin American Art

SAMA has long been recognized for its strength in Latin American folk art, an area of collecting anchored in 1985 by the gifts of the Nelson A. Rockefeller Mexican Folk Art Collection and the Robert K. Winn Folk Art Collection. In recent years, the Museum has begun expanding its Latin American collections to more

actively embrace contemporary art, seeking out pieces that reflect the diversity of artistic perspectives and experiences from across the region. Most recently, SAMA has purchased works by four artists, who work across a variety of media:

Jose Dávila

Joint Effort, 2014

Mirror, boulder, ratchet straps

72 1/4 x 49 1/4 x 51 3/16 inches (183.5 x 125 x 130 cm)

© Jose Dávila

Photography: Jason Wyche, New York

Courtesy: Sean Kelly, New York

In *Joint Effort*, two simple large mirrors are held together in a V-shape through the tension of industrial ratchet straps. Its sheer simplicity of construction and materials belies a complexity of contradictions between form and function; cold and warm; light and heavy; and emptiness and fullness. Jose Dávila's practice explores spatial occupation and the transitory nature of physical structures. Drawing on his formal training as an architect, Dávila creates sculptural installations and photographic works that simultaneously emulate, critique, and pay homage to twentieth-century avant-garde art and architecture.



Sonia Gomes

Brazilian, 1948

Untitled, 2007

Stitching, bindings, different fabrics, and laces on wire

82 5/8 x 39 x 13 3/8 in.

2019.12

For this monumental wall hanging from a body of work entitled *Torção*, Afro-Brazilian artist Sonia Gomes has meticulously stitched different fabrics and laces into endless convolutions. The work twists, spirals, and tapers in an organic, graceful, and even a visceral way that recalls biological forms and sacred objects; collective and personal stories; and memories and experiences. Underlying Gomes's aesthetic and conceptual choices is an intertwining of the history of art—artists such as Louise Bourgeois and Eva Hesse whose work makes deep connections to the physical, emotional, and

psychological aspects of the body—and her own personal history. Gomes’s maternal grandmother was an indigenous healer and midwife in her hometown of Caetanópolis, an important town for Brazilian textile industry and the location of her father’s family’s textile manufacturing business.

Pedro Reyes (b. Mexico, 1972)

Four pieces from the *Disarm* series (begun 2015)

Destroyed weapons, metal parts, string

Dimensions vary

Pedro Reyes is one of the most influential international Social Practice artists, and his *Disarm* series distills formal acumen and socio-political critique on the violent gun culture in Mexico. For this ambitious project, the artist collaborated with the Mexican Secretary of Defense, which confiscated 6,700 firearms, including revolvers, shotguns, and machine guns in Ciudad Juárez. A city of about 1.3 million people, it suffers an average of ten killings a day. The confiscated weapons were then crushed by tanks and steamrollers, after which craftspeople and metal workers created an orchestra of fifty instruments, from flutes to string to percussion instruments. These pieces were then automated to play a delightful, if surreal, loop, retaining the raw emotion of their origin.



Analia Saban

Argentina, 1980

Copper Tapestry (Dallas Semiconductor, DS1000Z, 1991),
2019

Woven copper wire and linen thread

86 3/4 x 65 1/2 x 1/16 in. (220.3 x 166.4 x 0.2 cm)

In this work from her 2019 *Tapestry* series, Analia Saban used a traditional loom to interlace linen with the nontraditional weaving material of copper. The artist modeled the pattern after an actual historical circuit board, recognizing that the earliest computers, which used punch cards, were modeled in part on weaving techniques; and that looms, in turn, used early punch-card technologies to function. The Argentina-born, Los Angeles-based artist works across a broad spectrum of mediums exploring how art objects are conceived, constructed, and understood. She consistently plays with, and even expands, the viewers’ expectations of what might constitute a “painting” or “sculpture,” offering inventive new hybrid forms that complicate such categories.

“These works are outstanding examples of the critical ideas motivating artistic practices today, combined with an evident formal acumen,” says Suzanne Weaver, The Brown Foundation Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. “I am thrilled to add works of such intelligence, imagination, and lasting relevance, and I’m immensely grateful to the artists and their dealers for their support in helping the Museum realize these transformative acquisitions.”

All contemporary Latin American art acquisitions were purchased thanks to The Brown Foundation Contemporary Art Acquisition Fund.

Contemporary Art: Gifts from the Alex Katz Foundation (2019)

Keltie Ferris

Ghost Trees, 2018

Oil and acrylic on canvas

72 by 60 in. 182.9 by 152.4 cm.

© Keltie Ferris

Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

For the past fourteen years Keltie Ferris has employed techniques that defy expectations and push the possibilities of painting. Using spray paint, she adopts a language associated with graffiti and home decor and deftly applies it to her canvases, creating effects which range from pointillist explosions to arabesque curves punctuated by what the artist calls “erasures” (zones of wet paint that have been wiped with a rag-cloth and turpentine).

Leah Durner

redgoldvioletdarkviolet pour, 2017

Poured latex enamel on birch board

20 x 16 in.

©2017 Leah Durner

Leah Durner’s poured enamel paintings, which reference psychedelia, the exuberance of Rococo painters like Fragonard and Boucher, and process-driven paintings of Abstract Expressionist painters offer rich conflicting combinations of color and surface. Her colors are sourced from fashion, design, construction sites, psychedelia, street signs, and other stimuli in the urban and mediated environment.

Sinéad Breslin

Luda in Mexico, 2018

Oil on canvas

67 x 59 in.

© Sinéad Breslin

The contemplative work of Sinéad Breslin builds on the figural, whether in landscapes or indoors. Through her subjects are often family members or friends, the works are not so much portraits as internalized and psychologized images redolent with the complexities of relationships.



Gaby Collins-Fernandez

Red Velvet 2IN1 BODY, 2014

Oil and acrylic paint on fabric

21 x 16 in.

© Gaby Collins-Fernandez

In the intimately scaled works of Gaby Collins-Fernandez, surfaces are animated with thick applications of pigment and strips and swags of velvet that recall garments, curtains, and costumes. Snippets of New York street conversation, captured fragments of a highly energetic and diverse urban culture, are embedded within the dense topography of her paintings.

Rob Pruitt

American Quilts 2018: The Have Nots and the Haves, 2018

Wool felt, 24 karat gold on linen

84 x 64 in.

© Rob Pruitt

Using a diverse range of materials and techniques in this piece, Rob Pruitt expands upon traditional American Folk handicraft patterns—e.g., the basket symbolizing home and hearth—to create a work with cultural, social, and political connotations. The title itself and the customary use of leftover scraps of fabric in quilt-making underline the artist’s concern with the “stark economic and political divide within the U.S. and a decline in democratic values across the globe.”

About the San Antonio Museum of Art

The San Antonio Museum of Art serves as a forum to explore and connect with art that spans the world’s geographies, artistic periods, genres, and cultures. Its collection contains nearly 30,000 works representing 5,000 years of history. Housed in the historic Lone Star Brewery on the Museum Reach of San Antonio’s River Walk, the San Antonio Museum of Art is committed to promoting the rich cultural heritage and life of the city. The Museum hosts hundreds of events and public programs each year, including concerts, performances, tours, lectures, symposia, and interactive experiences. As an active civic leader, the Museum is dedicated to enriching the cultural life of the city and the region, and to supporting its creative community.

Captions:

Analia Saban, Argentina, 1980, *Copper Tapestry (Dallas Semiconductor, DS1000Z, 1991)*, 2019, Woven copper wire and linen thread, 86 3/4 x 65 1/2 x 1/16 in. (220.3 x 166.4 x 0.2 cm)

Jose Dávila, *Joint Effort*, 2014, Mirror, boulder, ratchet straps, 72 1/4 x 49 1/4 x 51 3/16 inches (183.5 x 125 x 130 cm), © Jose Dávila, Photography: Jason Wyche, New York, Courtesy: Sean Kelly, New York

Sonia Gomes, Brazilian, 1948, *Untitled*, 2007, Stitching, bindings, different fabrics, and laces on wire, 82 5/8 x 39 x 13 3/8 in., 2019.12

Leah Durner, *redgoldvioletdarkviolet pour*, 2017, Poured latex enamel on birch board
20 x 16 in., ©2017 Leah Durner

Rob Pruitt, *American Quilts 2018: The Have Nots and the Haves*, 2018, Wool felt, 24 karat gold on linen, 84 x 64 in., © Rob Pruitt