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Arts-Entertainment

Exhibits

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81C Gallery To Exhibit Paintings by Nel Figueroa on Sept. 4

August 25, 2021

81C is honored to announce the launch of *Somnium Tropicae – New works by Nel Figueroa*, a full-scale art exhibition. The opening celebration event for the show will take place at 81C on Strand Gade in historic Charlotte Amalie on Saturday, Sept. 4. The show was originally scheduled to open in July but was rescheduled due to COVID-19 concerns.



"Micaela" painting by Nel Figueroa (Submitted photo)



"Menino" painting by Nel Figueroa (Submitted photo)

Show description

Nel Figueroa's avant-garde mixed media paintings offer viewers a paradoxically unusual yet familiar transcendence into themes of poetry, mysticism, humor, and pop-culture, while honoring the traditional Caribbean color palette, urban street art, and contemporary cultural convergences. Figueroa's soulful depictions and portrayals of celebration, natural earthly beauty, animals, and fashion keep us engaged, slightly nervous, as we wonder about the creative mind and personal pursuits of a prolific Ponce, Puerto Rico based artist. *Somnium Tropicae* encompasses new works by a dynamic, highly creative, and unrestrained artist.

A note on the works of Nel Figueroa

Fruit basket still lifes, vandalized vases filled with flower-like creatures and personified exotic birds are all among Nel's new subject matter. These are depicted with a simultaneously controlled, but exaggerated "Caribbean color palette," to comment on external allusions of how Caribbean paintings "should" look. This is happening over a thick ground layer that along with graffiti elements create a feeling of decay. Both objects and animals are presented in a transition state, either appearing or disappearing. The animals show a contemplative gaze while smoking or drinking. Through his work, Nel converts everyday objects and situations into representations of uncertainty, sudden loss, stress, self-medication, promised help, resource shortage and displacement. – Zawahra Alejandro

Artist statement

"My recent paintings reflect the internalization and externalizing of personal life experiences of the past three years. Circumstances such as the loss of my studio due to Hurricane Maria's passing and the dozens of earthquakes being felt south of Puerto Rico, have led me to new concepts, techniques, and imagery. These occurrences have pushed me to explore the idea and representations of unexpected events, absurd apparitions, landscape, and contemplation." – Nel Figueroa

Event details

Somnium Tropicæ – New works by Nel Figueroa

Exhibition opening event date and time: Saturday, Sept. 4, 2021, 5 p.m. to 12 a.m. Celebration, party and art gallery event.

Artist portrait of Nel Figueroa in Ponce, Puerto Rico (Photo by Zack Zook)

Location

81C – Downtown Charlotte Amalie. Strand Gade between waterfront and Market Square. Right around the corner from Moe's Grocery on the waterfront. Visit www.81CVI.com for a map link. Or Google 81C Virgin Islands.

Parking and other info

Park on the waterfront. Covid-19 capacity regulations will be observed. Face masks are required to enter the event. Drinks will be available for a suggested donation.

Gallery hours

The exhibition will be on display for two weeks and viewings are available by both public walk-in and private appointment. Gallery hours are 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.. Art sales contact person: Joseph Hewes 340-244-5056 / Publicity contact person: Zack Zook 917-327-1561.

About 81C

81C is a newly opened event venue in historic downtown featuring a pop-up event space and art gallery. The space is available for private and public pop-up event rentals. 81C was

launched by entrepreneur Zack Zook after several years of renovation and restoration to the (circa 1810) building located at 81C Kronprindsens Gade. The space is currently operated by Joseph Hewes, Augustin Kelvin Holder, and Zack Zook.

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