

inHARLEM

Media Release

Spring/Summer 2018

Exhibitions



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The Studio Museum in Harlem
144 West 125th Street
New York, NY 10027
studiomuseum.org/press

The Studio Museum in Harlem Announces New Exhibitions In Its Ongoing Series Of *inHarlem* Initiatives

**Latest Presentations Off-Site but
in-the-Neighborhood Will Offer New Works by
Firelei Báez and Maren Hassinger, Shown in
Partnership with NYPL's Schomburg Center and
the Marcus Garvey Park Alliance/NYC Parks**



Firelei Báez in her studio. Photo: SaVonne Anderson

NEW YORK, NY, April 2, 2018 —The Studio Museum in Harlem today announced the next two projects in its *inHarlem* initiative: a series of off-site but in-the-neighborhood collaborations designed to deepen the Studio Museum's roots in the community through exhibitions, conversations, art-making workshops, and more at a variety of partner and satellite locations. The *inHarlem* series was inaugurated in 2016 and will ramp up as the Studio Museum proceeds to construct its new building, designed by Adjaye Associates in collaboration with Cooper Robertson.

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The *inHarlem* exhibition ***Firelei Báez: Joy Out of Fire*** will be on view from May 1 through November 24 in the Latimer/Edison Gallery at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Outdoor sculptural installations organized through *inHarlem* in Marcus Garvey Park, titled ***Maren Hassinger: Monuments***, will be on view from June 16, 2018–June 10, 2019. Both exhibitions are organized by Hallie Ringle, Assistant Curator at The Studio Museum in Harlem.

Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator of the Studio Museum, said, “As we move toward the start of construction on our new home, we’re very proud to be working with partners in our community to present new work by remarkable artists of two generations. Maren Hassinger, who has been associated with the Studio Museum since 1984, will be creating the most recent of her powerful, site-specific, nature-based sculptures in Marcus Garvey Park through our collaboration with the Marcus Garvey Park Alliance and NYC Parks. Firelei Báez, who first exhibited with us in 2012, will create a new suite of her deeply involving works, based on research conducted at the Schomburg Center and then shown in that same institution. We are grateful to the artists, our partner institutions, and our generous supporters for enabling us to engage our community with these exhibitions.”

For *Firelei Báez: Joy Out of Fire*, the artist is creating imaginative portraits—“visual road maps,” in her words—celebrating the complex histories of notable black women of the United States and the Caribbean who made their mark on the twentieth century as artists, authors, activists, entertainers, educators, and public officials.

Working closely with NYPL Schomburg Center staff, Báez has researched the lives of women whose archives are housed at the Schomburg Center, such as Maya Angelou, Jean Blackwell Hutson, and Ada “Bricktop” Smith, and has explored additional archival holdings to find insights into other figures, such as Oprah, Maritcha Remond Lyons, and Shirley Graham Du Bois. The results will be as many as a dozen intricate new works, which will incorporate materials such as reproductions of archival photographs, notes, diaries, letters and manuscripts.

Although the works will evoke the lives of individual women—especially women whose stories Báez wants to bring out of obscurity—the works will not be portrait likenesses in the conventional sense. Rather, the ensemble will create a celebratory space in the gallery of the Schomburg Center, imparting something of the joy that these extraordinary women brought out of the fire of their lives, as they shared their concerns and ideas and gave one another support and inspiration across the generations.

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Maren Hassinger: Monuments will take the form of eight site-specific sculptures installed for one year in Marcus Garvey Park, beginning June 16, 2018. Working in the tradition of her earlier projects such as *Wreath* (1978), Hassinger will use branches to create forms that respond to aspects of the park's landscape—an outcropping of rock, a rectangle near flower beds, an oval near the pool. A Harlem resident who regards Marcus Garvey Park as her neighborhood green space, Hassinger will create the works with the assistance of volunteers from the Studio Museum's Teen Leadership Council and *Expanding the Walls* program, so that *Monuments* will be a project made in Harlem and for Harlem.

Hallie Ringle said, "We're reaching across the generations, and across both indoor and outdoor space, to present these projects by Maren Hassinger and Firelei Báez with the collaboration of our wonderful partner institutions. These new *inHarlem* exhibitions touch on themes of community, creative energy, respect for the earth, and histories both told and untold. Thanks to everyone who has joined with us, we are thrilled to be able to reach out to our neighbors in Harlem through these exceptional projects."

Novella Ford, Associate Director of Public Programs and Exhibitions at the Schomburg Center, said "The Schomburg Center is excited to partner with the Studio Museum to bring Firelei Báez's work to our patrons. The *inHarlem* program is quickly turning into an ongoing creative partnership, with artists finding inspiration for new creative works in our extensive archives. What began with ***Derrick Adams: Patrick Kelly, The Journey*** now continues with Firelei Báez's project, allowing us to expand our work in advancing public knowledge of the global black experience in new and innovative ways."

Connie Lee, President of the Marcus Garvey Park Alliance, said, "Our collaboration with the Studio Museum on the first *inHarlem* project with the installation of Simon Leigh's extraordinary sculptures raised the experience of Marcus Garvey Park to a new level for everyone in our community. We are proud that such a distinguished artist as Maren Hassinger, with her great sensitivity to the natural world, is now creating works that will deepen our visitors' connection to the park's beloved landscape."

"Parks is pleased to partner with The Studio Museum in Harlem once again, bringing public art to Marcus Garvey Park," said NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP. "We are honored to be a part of the Studio Museum's golden anniversary celebration and we look forward to presenting this profoundly meaningful group of works by Maren Hassinger to the surrounding communities and visitors to the park."

About the Artists

Firelei Báez (b. 1981, Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic) was educated at Cooper Union (BFA 2004), the Skowhegan School (2008) and Hunter College (MFA 2010). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University, the Edgewood Gallery of Yale University School of Art, the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the Pinchuk Art Center in Kiev and the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, CA, among others. Solo exhibitions include shows at the Perez Art Museum of Miami, Taller Puertorriqueno in Philadelphia, the Andy Warhol Museum, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati. A recipient of the Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award, the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Award in Painting, and the Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting, she has shown work at the Studio Museum in exhibitions including *Fore* (2012–13), *Concealed: Selections from the Permanent Collection* (2015), and *Regarding the Figure* (2017), and her work is included in the Museum's permanent collection.

Maren Hassinger (b. 1947, Los Angeles) studied sculpture, photography, and dance at Bennington College, and completed her MFA in Fiber Structures at UCLA. In 1984–85, Hassinger was an artist in residence at The Studio Museum in Harlem, where her work has since been included in numerous exhibitions, including *Required Nuance: Three Contemporary Sculptors* (1995), *Passages: Contemporary Art in Translation* (1999–2000), *30 Seconds off an Inch* (2009–10), and *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art* (2013–14). She has created outdoor works since 1977, working in collaboration with institutions including Creative Time, the Atlanta Festival for the Arts, the Houston Festival, Socrates Sculpture Park, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the MTA's Arts for Transit program, and the Chicago Park District's "Art in the Garden" project in Grant Park. Her work is included in more than 34 catalogs and is in the public collections of institutions including The Studio Museum in Harlem; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, Baltimore; California African American Museum, Los Angeles; Williams College Art Museum; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, OR. A recipient of The Anonymous Was A Woman and International Association of Art Critics awards, Hassinger has performed at MoMA PS1 and received grants from the Gottlieb Foundation, Joan Mitchell Foundation, Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Since 1997, she has been Director of

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the Rinehart School of Graduate Sculpture at Maryland Institute College of Art, one of the oldest programs of its type in the United States.

About *inHarlem*

The *inHarlem* initiatives encompass a wide range of artistic and programmatic ventures, from site-specific artists' projects to collaborative presentations with civic and cultural partners in Harlem. The initiatives began in August 2016 with specially commissioned sculptural works by Kevin Beasley, Simone Leigh, Kori Newkirk, and Rudy Shepherd, realized in Morningside Park, Marcus Garvey Park, St. Nicholas Park, and Jackie Robinson Park, respectively. Another, more recent *inHarlem* initiative was the exhibition *Derrick Adams: Patrick Kelly, The Journey*, organized in collaboration with the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and presented in the Countee Cullen Branch of the New York Public Library from May 2017 through February 2018.

About The Studio Museum in Harlem

Founded in 1968 by a diverse group of artists, community activists and philanthropists, The Studio Museum in Harlem is internationally known for its catalytic role in promoting the work of outstanding artists of African descent. Now approaching its fiftieth anniversary, the Studio Museum is preparing to construct a new home at its current location on Manhattan's West 125th Street, designed by internationally renowned architect David Adjaye of Adjaye Associates in collaboration with Cooper Robertson. The first building created expressly for the institution's program, the new building will enable the Studio Museum to better serve a growing and diverse audience, provide additional educational opportunities for people of all ages, expand its program of world-renowned exhibitions, effectively display its singular collection and strengthen its trailblazing *Artist-in-Residence* program.

The *Artist-in-Residence* program is one of the institution's founding initiatives and the reason why "Studio" is in the name. The program has supported more than one hundred emerging artists of African or Latino descent, many of whom who have gone on to highly regarded careers. Alumni include Chakaia Booker, David Hammons, Kerry James Marshall, Julie Mehretu, Wangechi Mutu, Mickalene Thomas and Kehinde Wiley.

The collection includes more than two thousand paintings, sculptures, works on paper, prints, photographs, mixed-media

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works and installations dating from the nineteenth century to the present. Artists represented include Romare Bearden, Robert Colescott, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Chris Ofili, Betye Saar, Lorna Simpson, Kara Walker and Hale Woodruff, as well as many former artists in residence. The Studio Museum is the custodian of an extensive archive of the work of photographer James VanDerZee, the renowned chronicler of the Harlem community from 1906 to 1983.

The Studio Museum's exhibitions expand the personal, public and academic understanding of modern and contemporary work by artists of African descent. A wide variety of on- and off-site programs brings art alive for audiences of all ages—from toddlers to seniors—while serving as a bridge between artists of African descent and a broad and diverse public. A leader in scholarship about artists of African descent, the Studio Museum publishes *Studio* magazine twice a year and creates award-winning books, exhibition catalogues and brochures.

While the Studio Museum's galleries are currently closed in preparation for a late Fall 2018 groundbreaking, the Museum is working to deepen its roots in the community through *inHarlem*, a dynamic set of collaborative programs in our neighborhood. The Museum's groundbreaking exhibitions, thought-provoking conversations, and engaging art-making workshops continue at a variety of partner and satellite locations in Harlem. The Museum Store remains active at 144 West 125th Street, open every day from noon until 6 pm. A Visitor Center on site provides information on *inHarlem* and the building project.

For more information, visit studiomuseum.org. Find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube: [@studiomuseum](https://www.instagram.com/studiomuseum)

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About The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research unit of The New York Public Library, is generally recognized as one of the leading institutions of its kind in the world. For over 90 years the Center has collected, preserved, and provided access to materials documenting black life, and promoted the study and interpretation of the history and culture of peoples of African descent. Educational and Cultural Programs at the Schomburg Center complement its research services and interpret its collections. Seminars, forums, workshops, staged readings, film screenings, performing arts programs, and special events are presented year-round. More information about Schomburg's collections and programs can be found at schomburgcenter.org.

About the New York Public Library

The New York Public Library is a free provider of education and information for the people of New York and beyond. With ninety-three locations—including research and branch libraries—throughout the Bronx, Manhattan and Staten Island, the Library offers free materials, computer access, classes, exhibitions, programming and more to everyone from toddlers to scholars, and has seen record numbers of attendance and circulation in recent years. The New York Public Library serves more than 17 million patrons who come through its doors annually and millions more around the globe who use its resources at nypl.org. To offer this wide array of free programming, The New York Public Library relies on both public and private funding. Learn more about how to support the Library at nypl.org/support.

About NYC Parks

For over 50 years, NYC Parks' Art in the Parks program has brought contemporary public artworks to the city's parks, making New York City one of the world's largest open-air galleries. The agency has consistently fostered the creation and installation of temporary public art in parks throughout the five boroughs. Since 1967, NYC Parks has collaborated with arts organizations and artists to produce over 2,000 public artworks by 1,300 notable and emerging artists in over 200 parks. For more information about the program visit nyc.gov/parks/art.

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