



THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES (ICA LA) ANNOUNCES

**GRAND OPENING WEEKEND CELEBRATION ON SEPTEMBER 9–10, 2017
WITH INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS, PERFORMANCES, ART TALKS, TOURS, AND MORE!**

PRESENTING INAUGURAL EXHIBITIONS SEPTEMBER 9–DECEMBER 31, 2017

MARTÍN RAMÍREZ: HIS LIFE IN PICTURES, ANOTHER INTERPRETATION

PROJECT ROOM: ABIGAIL DEVILLE

SARAH CAIN: *NOW I'M GOING TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING*

PRESS PREVIEW

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2017, 10am–12:30pm

RSVP: COMMUNICATIONS@THEICALA.ORG

Los Angeles (August 7, 2017) — The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA) announced today a diverse array of free activities for all ages, including interactive workshops, performances, tours, and art talks to celebrate the museum's grand opening weekend on September 9–10, 2017. Visitors are invited to experience the exhibition-related programming and view the inaugural shows in the new 12,700-square-foot facility in the Arts District of Downtown Los Angeles, designed by wHY under the creative direction of architect Kulapat Yantrasast.

Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation will occupy the museum's main gallery with a presentation of drawings by acclaimed artist *Martín Ramírez* (1895–1963). The exhibition will chart his journey from Jalisco, Mexico to the United States, and offer a constellation of imagery—from rancheros to trains and tunnels—that will deepen understanding of his creative process and the many dimensions of his immigrant experience. The Project Room will house a new installation by New York artist Abigail DeVille, the artist's first solo museum exhibition in Los Angeles. DeVille's work addresses social displacement and cultural erasure and will be created using found objects from ICA LA's surrounding neighborhoods. A new site-specific work by Los Angeles-based artist Sarah Cain will be featured in the museum's courtyard entrance on 7th Street, melding the gestures and techniques of various art historical periods and styles.

A wide-ranging schedule of activities related to *Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation* will be offered during the opening weekend to give visitors a preview of the museum's upcoming season of partnerships, collaborations, public programs, and education initiatives. ICA LA is committed to making contemporary art relevant and accessible for all, and as always, admission to exhibitions and programs is FREE. Beginning on September 1, visitors can view the complete list of ICA LA's fall schedule at www.theicala.org

GRAND OPENING WEEKEND SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, September 9

Bilingual guided exhibition tours of *Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation*

1pm, 2:30pm, 4pm

Join Elsa Longhauser, executive director of ICA LA and curator of *Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation*, and Victor Espinosa, biographer of the artist, for in-depth walkthroughs of the exhibition.

Víctor M. Espinosa holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University and currently teaches at The Ohio State University. He is the author of *Martín Ramírez: Framing His Life and Art* (University of Texas Press 2015).

Elsa Longhauser is Executive Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and curator of *Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation*.

Matchsticks and Mashed Potatoes

11am–4pm

Take a seat at this open workshop and make collaged drawings in the spirit of Martín Ramírez. While at DeWitt State Hospital, Ramírez's commitment to drawing in spite of his limited access to art supplies led him to alternative methods and materials, including matchsticks for drawing and mashed potatoes for glue. For this workshop, attendees are invited to use similar resources to create unique works that evoke Ramírez's extraordinary creations.

Live performance by Los Jornaleros del Norte (The Day Laborers of the North)

5pm

Los Jornaleros del Norte will perform a live concert of original songs written in solidarity with day laborers. Los Jornaleros have become a pillar of LA's grassroots migrant rights movement, using their music to educate, organize, and mobilize the public. With musicians from Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico, Los Jornaleros del Norte present a united Latin American front in addressing family separation, unjust detention, inhumane incarceration, and the persecution of communities of color.

Sunday, September 10

Migrar—Storybook reading and art workshop with LA librería and Book Arts LA

11:30am-1:30pm

Spanish-language children's bookstore LA librería will lead a bilingual reading of *Migrar*—a story written by José Manuel Mateo about a young boy and his family's migration experience from Mexico to the United States. Artist Javier Martínez Pedro illustrates the journey as one continuous drawing that unfolds like an accordion across a series of beautifully printed pages, evoking pre-Columbian Mayan codices. Following the reading, Book Arts LA will host a bookmaking workshop with *papel amaté*—a paper made from tree bark. RSVP required, reservations begin on September 1, 2017 at www.theicala.org.

LA librería was founded in 2012 with the goal of promoting Spanish-language children's literature in all its forms. LA librería's selection of poetry, graphic novels, chapter books, and comics reflects the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Spanish-speaking countries and communities. The project was born of a passion for children's literature and bilingual education, and the struggle with limited availability to quality books.

Books Arts LA is a nonprofit organization devoted to bringing the beauty of printing, binding, and collecting handmade books to the public. The organization is run by a dedicated board of artists who provide year-round workshops and forums about bookmaking.

Ramírez Re-examined

A conversation with James Oles, Rubén Gallo, Josh Kun, and Harriet Stratis

Moderated by Elsa Longhauser

2–3:30pm

Leading scholars of Latin American art and culture Josh Kun, Rubén Gallo, James Oles, and conservator Harriet Stratis, will discuss the life and work of Martín Ramírez. Drawing on biographical records, the history of art in Mexico, the social dynamics of California in the mid-20th century, and Ramírez's techniques and materials, this group will add a range of new perspectives to the artist's complex story.

Rubén Gallo is the Walter S. Carpenter Jr. Professor in Language, Literature and Civilization of Spain at Princeton University.

Josh Kun is Professor of Communication at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, and is a 2016 MacArthur Fellow.

Elsa Longhauser is Executive Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and curator of *Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation*.

James Oles is Senior Lecturer in the Art Department at Wellesley College and a specialist in Latin American art, focusing on modern Mexican art and architecture, through museum as well as academic projects.

Harriet Stratis is Principal at Stratis Fine Art Conservation.

Cambalache Performance and Workshop

Maestro Cesar Castro, Xochi Flores, Chuy Sandoval, and Juan Perez

4–5pm

Join a lively performance and interactive workshop led by Cambalache, featuring Maestro Cesar Castro, Xochi Flores, Chuy Sandoval, and Juan Perez. Audiences will learn about the origins of Veracruz-based musical tradition Son Jarocho, its roots, and how it made its way to Los Angeles. Participate in a *fandango* with verse, dance, and percussion to celebrate the beauty of this multigenerational and participatory tradition.

INAUGURAL EXHIBITIONS ON VIEW SEPTEMBER 9–DECEMBER 31, 2017

Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation is the first solo presentation of this celebrated self-taught artist in Southern California. The exhibition is part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles. Organized by ICA LA Executive Director Elsa Longhauser, the exhibition will feature approximately fifty works that demonstrate the artist's rhythmic mark making and reveal the development of his unique visual vocabulary, which has been influential on subsequent generations of artists. A monumental 18-foot scroll that comprises a glossary of his singular imagery and forms will be on view for the first time.

Ramírez migrated to the United States in 1925 to seek work on the railroads. Following the Great Crash of 1929, Ramírez found himself unemployed and on the streets. Detained by police for vagrancy, and following a hasty diagnosis of schizophrenia by doctors who did not speak Spanish, Ramírez was interned in state psychiatric hospitals in Northern California for 30 years until his death in 1963.

Within these confines, Ramírez produced a body of remarkable drawings collaged from found paper and executed with matchsticks, melted crayons, and other makeshift implements. The resulting drawings range from small-scale abstractions to monumental figures and scrolls, which demonstrate Ramírez's unique draftsmanship of concentric lines, undulating patterns, and surreal topography.

Until now Ramírez's drawings have been discussed primarily in the context of Western art, with the exception of a major exhibition held in Mexico City, in which his drawings were displayed alongside folk art objects and artifacts. ICA LA's exhibition, on the other hand, accounts for Ramírez's hybrid character—he was an artist who drew from his Mexican past and negotiated his American present. This exhibition draws Ramírez into the critical orbit of art in California, where the crossover between Latin American art and American Modernism found its fullest realization.

A full-color publication will accompany the exhibition, with foreword by Elsa Longhauser and contributions by Josh Kun, professor at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and a 2016 MacArthur Fellow; James Oles, lecturer in Latin American art at Wellesley College; Rubén Gallo, director of Princeton University's Latin American Studies program; Mark Pascale, Janet and Craig Duchossois Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago; Harriet Stratis, Principal at Stratis Fine Art Conservation; artists Jim Nutt and Gladys Nilsson; and ICA LA Curator Jamillah James. These essays will offer new insights into the artist, his process, and his transnational experience.

PROJECT ROOM: ABIGAIL DEVILLE

For the opening exhibition in ICA LA's Project Room, ICA LA Curator Jamillah James will organize the first Los Angeles solo presentation of Bronx-based multidisciplinary artist Abigail DeVille (b. 1981). Noted for her complex, immersive installations, DeVille's work touches upon displacement, migration, and cultural invisibility. DeVille acts as an archaeologist, gathering and repurposing found materials to expose unspoken histories and forgotten pasts. Her

work alludes to the production and experience of physical space, particularly for women and people of color, and the perpetuation of social and economic injustice and inequity. As part of her exhibition at ICA LA, DeVille will create new, mobile sculptures to be featured in an upcoming public event organized by the Los Angeles Poverty Department.

SARAH CAIN: now i'm going to tell you everything

Los Angeles-based artist Sarah Cain (b. 1979) will create a large-scale temporary work for ICA LA's courtyard wall on 7th Street. Cain's abstract paintings often flirt with installation, unfolding across walls and floors, uncontained by the frame of the canvas. Recent work incorporates furniture, textiles, jewelry, and found objects as a way to break up the experience of painting as a two-dimensional form. Her vivid, playful patchwork of lines and shapes resist simple definition, recalling styles as diverse as abstract expressionism, graffiti, Pop, and Feminist craft.

Exhibition Hours

Wednesday–Friday 11am to 7pm; Saturday and Sunday 11am to 6pm

Address

1717 E. 7th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90021

Martín Ramírez: His Life in Pictures, Another Interpretation is presented by the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles as part of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA.



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Project Room and Courtyard exhibitions are made possible, in part, by ICA LA's Curator's Council.

About the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA)

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA) is a museum opening in September 2017 in Downtown Los Angeles. ICA LA's revelatory exhibitions of works by international artists, dynamic public programs, and inclusive community partnerships will reflect the diversity of Los Angeles and the world, fostering critique of the familiar and empathy with the different.

Founded in 1984 as the Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA), ICA LA serves as a *kunsthalle*, a non-collecting institution. The museum's newly renovated 12,700-square-foot industrial building designed by wHY under the leadership of architect Kulapat Yantrasast features ample spaces for exhibitions, education initiatives, offices, and a future café. ICA LA will build on its distinguished history of fostering artistic experimentation with bold curatorial choices and presenting the first West Coast solo exhibitions of artists who go on to celebrated stature.

ICA LA supports art that sparks the pleasure of discovery and challenges the way we see and experience the world, ourselves, and each other. The museum will nourish the community through the arts: educating the eye, stimulating the intellect, and nurturing the life of the mind and the spirit. For more information, visit theicala.org. Join the conversation, follow on social media at @theicala and #icala

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