



Tiffany Alfonseca

De las manos que nos crearon

Curated by César García-Alvarez

Sept. 25 - Dec. 18, 2021

Tiffany Alfonseca (b. 1994) is a Dominican-American, Bronx-based artist whose practice explores the nuances and complexities of Black Latinx experiences. Drawing from her lived experiences Alfonseca creates works that acknowledge and value the ways Black and Brown people represent themselves while challenging their depiction by others in both art history and popular culture. This exhibition is her first institutional solo show.

De las manos que nos crearon is a portrait of family forged through the stories of grandmothers, mothers, and daughters. Every picture hanging in the exhibition space corresponds to a family photograph that captures an intimate moment in the life of the artist, her loved ones, or her friends. A grandmother's wedding day, a mother's quinceañera, a day at the beach, and a house party hold the painterly spaces of beauty, leisure, and rest that historically have been denied in depictions of Black and Brown people. Collectively, these works challenge a genre that for too long has serviced mostly those who lack the imaginative capacity to see racialized bodies as fully human. Here, portraiture and home are bound at the center of a universe of complex narratives that are at once empowering and oppressive. For each instance of celebration, there is another that reminds us of class inequalities, struggles with patriarchy, and divisions instigated by colorism. The call and response between joy and pain that shapes the lives of Black Latinx people reverberates not in the abstract but in every embodied occasion. At a time when much figurative painting trends towards the idealized and aspirational to prove the universal worth of its subjects to the broadest possible public, Tiffany takes the majesty of the people in her life as a non-negotiable starting point. Secure in that truth, she moves past idealized visions of Latinidad and Blackness to pose difficult questions about how the two are inextricably connected and divided, especially in the most quotidian moments. Installed as a photo album of sorts that traverses histories and geographies, the exhibition aspires to highlight the nuances and complexities of Black Latinx experiences and their anchoring role in understanding Latinidad in America. The exhibition, the artist's most ambitious to date, debuts over 20 new works created during a residency she conducted at TMR in Summer 2021. A series of in-person, virtual, and hybrid programs exploring practices of care for Black and Brown bodies will accompany the exhibition.