

PROOF

DIANA GUERRERO-MACIÁ | NEW EDITIONS SUMMER 2018

Painting, textiles, and collage have consistently orbited the interdisciplinary work of Chicago-based artist Diana Guerrero-Maciá. Through the use of semiotics, her visual vocabulary continues to engage themes such as raising critical concerns about race and the human body, leveling the gendering of art genres and materiality, and adopting historical modes of iconography informed by contemporary social currents and cultures.

During her residency at Island Press in spring 2017, Guerrero-Maciá made four new works that compose *The Beautiful Girls* series. Each depicts a face comprising shapes, textures, and imagery created using multiple printmaking processes and techniques such as embossing, relief, monoprint, inkjet printing, and collagraphy. The reductive aesthetic of these faces invokes Guerrero-Maciá's apt use of semiotics, where shape, color, and texture provide depth in material meaning whereby breaking up binaries—black/white, common/distinct, male/female—of archetypal beauty.

The eyes in *The Beautiful Girls No. 2* were sourced by searching Google for words like beauty, which yielded results such as images of 1960s English model Twiggy who was known for her lashed doll eyes. Guerrero-Maciá then upends this one-dimensional media output of beauty by applying a third eye. The wide eyes become a source of validation, bearing witness to the issues of reading value on one's appearance. Simultaneously, the third eye hovering above, which is from a traditional medical journal illustrating problems with the eye, prompts considerations of the strengths/limitations of sensorial perceptions and perhaps offers reflection on one's inner space.



Above: *The Beautiful Girls No. 1*, collagraph, monotype, relief, archival inkjet, printed linen, and collage on Rives BFK Off White, 17 x 14 inches. Edition 14.

Materials like linen, paint, and photographic imagery are collaged and transmuted by various print processes in this series, creating echoes of other references—painting (the historical use of Belgian linen), fashion, the body, gender, race, economics—thereby emphasizing Guerrero-Maciá's interest in the intergenerational complexities of meaning inherent in materials. By mining these materials in an abstract way Guerrero-Maciá focuses on the psychological or subjective inflection of her figural depictions rather than prescribing an objective narrative. This aspect of the series connects Guerrero-Maciá's work to German artist Hannah Höch's photomontages of the 1920s, a noted influence for her innovations in collage. Höch's *Das schöne Mädchen* [*The Beautiful Girl*] (1920) followed by her *Ethnographic Museum* series (1924–30), like Guerrero-Maciá's print collages, investigate mainstream



Above, clockwise from top: *The Beautiful Girls No. 4*, relief, monotype, blind embossment, and archival inkjet collage on Rives BFK Off White, 17 x 14 inches; *Beautiful Girls No. 2*, relief, monotype, blind embossment, and archival inkjet collage on Rives BFK Off White, 17 x 14 inches; *The Beautiful Girls No. 3*, collagraph, monotype, archival inkjet, and collage on Rives BFK Off White, 17 x 14 inches; *The*. Edition size 14.

representations of gender and racial and social economics through the guise of implanted semiotic shape and imagery.

Guerrero-Maciá has long been interested in the subtle transformation of things—materials into meaning—which she continues in *The Beautiful Girls* series. Considered as faces rather than portraits, Guerrero-Maciá's works open further reading on and a subjective dialogue and resonance with the information (imagery and materials) provided. Beauty, then, is indeed in the eye of the beholder and not a prescribed leitmotif in these works.

by **Erin Dziedzic**, Director of Curatorial Affairs, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Diana Guerrero-Maciá served as the Arthur L. and Sheila Prenskey Island Press Visiting Artist in March 2017. She has exhibited nationally and internationally, created several public art commissions, received multiple grants and residencies including a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award and two fellowships at the MacDowell Colony. Guerrero-Maciá studied and was awarded fellowships at both Skowhegan School of Art and Penland School of Craft. Selected solo exhibitions include the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis as well as Traywick Contemporary and Carrie Secrist Galleries. Additional exhibitions include Elmhurst Art Museum (Chicago), Sonoma Valley Museum of Art (California), Loyola University Museum of Art (Chicago), and the Bronx Museum. She holds an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and BFA from Villanova University. She is currently a Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She lives in Chicago with her husband and son who both love riding bicycles with her.

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ISLAND PRESS

Island Press is a research-based printmaking workshop and publisher committed to education and innovation in contemporary print editions and artist projects. Visiting artists work side by side with the master printer and students in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis. The result is high-quality print editions of technical complexity created in a unique setting where artists and students share skill sets and ideas.

Island Press is project-driven and collaborative, tapping into the place where the artist's creative research intersects with the all of the

possibilities of the print studio. Recent artist projects include editions with Radcliffe Bailey, Chakaia Booker, Squeak Carnwath, Willie Cole, Henrik Drescher, Chris Duncan, Tom Friedman, Ann Hamilton, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Nina Katchadourian, Shaun O'Dell, Lisa Sanditz, Beverly Semmes, James Siena, and Paula Wilson.

Island Press was founded in 1978. Past visiting artists include Hung Liu, Jaune Quick-To-See-Smith, Joyce Scott, Juan Sanchez, Nick Cave, and many other great artists.

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