

## **ARTIST BIOS–**

### **NATALIA ARBELAEZ**

Natalia Arbelaez is a Colombian-American artist born and raised in Miami, Florida, to immigrant parents. She received her BFA from Florida International University and her MFA with an Enrichment Fellowship from The Ohio State University. Her work has been exhibited internationally in museums, galleries, and included in various collections, such as the Everson Museum, New York; Museum of Art and Design (MAD), New York; Fuller Craft Museum, Massachusetts; The ICA Miami; and the Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada. In 2016–2017, Arbelaez was a Rittenberg Fellow at Clay Art Center in Port Chester, New York, and was awarded the Inaugural Artaxis Fellowship that funded a residency at Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts in Newcastle, Maine. In 2018, she was recognized by NCECA as an Emerging Artist and was a 2018-19 resident artist in the Ceramics Program at Harvard University, where she researched pre-Columbian art and histories. In 2019-2020, Arbelaez was an artist-in-residence at MAD in New York City, where she researched the work of historical and influential women ceramicists of color and continued this research as a 2021 and 2023 Visiting Artist at the American Museum of Ceramic Art (AMOCA) in Pomona, California. She joined the School of Art + Art History + Design as Assistant Professor in Ceramics in the fall of 2024 after completing a residency at the MenLo Studio in Jingdezhen, China, where she spent the summer researching the city's rich ceramic history and industry.

### **MANUEL HERNANDEZ**

Manuel Hernandez is a Mexico City born NYC based painter. The content of his dynamic paintings broadens the narrative of contemporary Native American people within Latin America. In the compositions, written history merges with the oral histories of his ancestors to create a visual representation of reclamation and all the feelings that come with it. In his artistic practice, Hernandez creates rough surfaces attached to walls which are subsequently painted using a dry brush method to create an impression reminiscent of old murals, a method which in its totality acts as a tribute to the Mexican Muralist movement and the ancient fresco murals of Teotihuacan in Mexico. In a departure from the tradition of square paintings, Hernandez cuts his canvases into shapes resembling animal hide paintings. His works are inspired by family stories, historical research, and visits to, and exploration of, his ancestors' artworks and ruins. Hereby, the new works retell the stories of Hernandez's ancestors, reestablishing his connection to the cultures of indigenous populations in America from a new perspective. By adopting this method of work Hernandez creates large-scale paintings that integrate the past with contemporary attitudes and ways of life.

## SHAWN THEODORE

Shawn Theodore (b. 1970) was born in Germany to American parents from Philadelphia, and currently lives and works in Philadelphia. Theodore was awarded the prestigious PDN's 30 New & Emerging Photographers to Watch (2019), the Getty Images/ARRAY *'Where We Stand'* grant, and a grant from the Knight Foundation for *'A Dream Deferred.'* Theodore was a two-time nominee for the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage Fellowship and a nominee for the Magnum Foundation Fund. He is an Associate Adjunct Professor at the University of the Arts, a trustee of the Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, and a former trustee of the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center. Theodore first came into prominence for his color-saturated, silhouette-focused street photography work which garnered the attention of several media outlets as well as consumer-focused companies due to its graphic and illustrative nature. The first solo exhibition of his street photography was of his first photography project, *'The Avenues'* in 2015 at the Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia, as a part of Re-PLACE-ing Philadelphia, which was supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. His first museum solo exhibition entitled *Church of Broken Pieces* opened at The African American Museum in Philadelphia from February 2, 2017, to April 2, 2017. This exhibition was a survey of over 50 photographic artworks made by the artist and traveled to Richard Beavers Gallery from September 16, 2017, to November 17, 2017. The artist was awarded a grant from Getty Images/ARRAY *'Where We Stand'* for this specific project in 2018. In 2019 his collage work was featured in The New York Times *'What Reparations for Slavery Might Look Like in 2019'*, in 2020 the New Republic *'From Black Power to Black Establishment'* and *'Bookerism and the Black Elite'*, and *'The Fight to Decolonize the Museum'* was featured in The Atlantic. Theodore's first photographic monograph *Birmingham* was published by Kris Graves Projects in 2019. The book was made over a month's time from the artist walking and photographing the various neighborhoods that constitute Birmingham, Alabama. The book examines the physical relationship between the African-American community and its future while utilizing socioeconomic disparities as a contextual framework.