

Welancora

Press Release

Migrating Sun Part 1

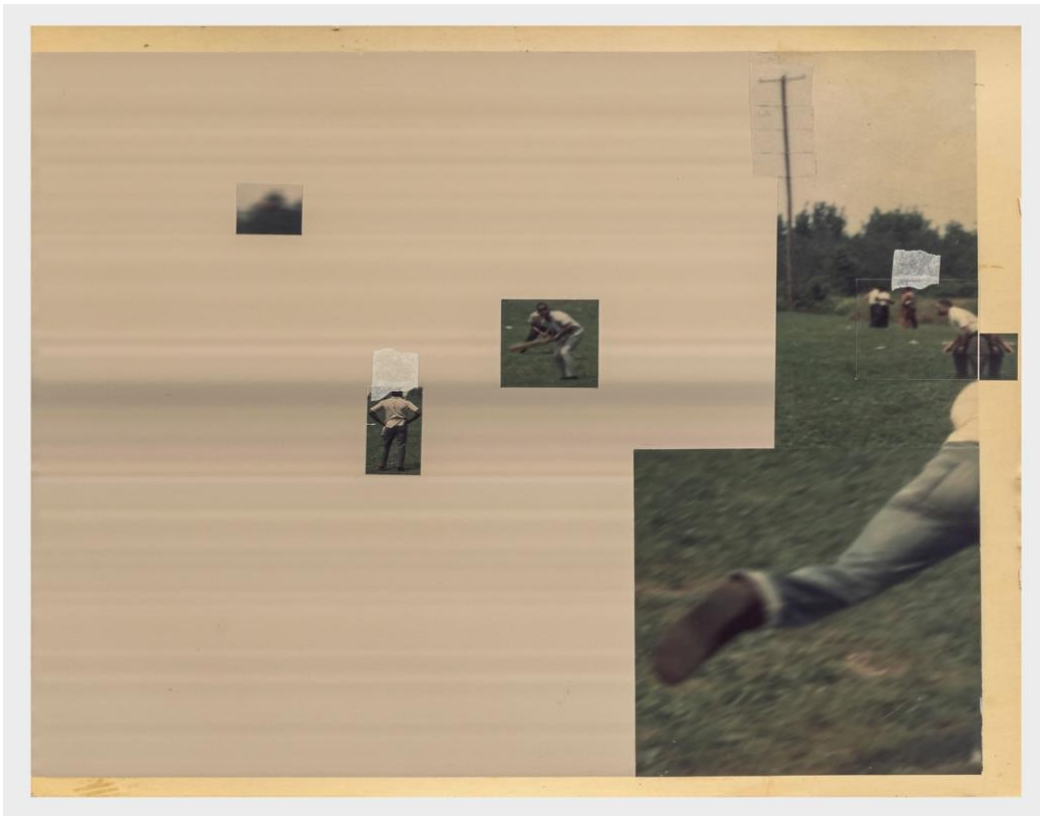
Opening Reception: Thursday, September 8
6pm to 8pm

September 8-November 12, 2022

33 Herkimer Street

Brooklyn, New York 11216

Masks are required



Welancora is pleased to present *Migrating Sun Part 1*, a group exhibition of work by Demetri Burke, Ryan Cosbert, Kim Dacres, Meron Engida, Renluka Maharaj, Na'ye Perez, Omar E. Saad, Khari Turner, and Cyle Warner, co-curated by Na'ye Perez. Through the work of this diverse group of artists, the first iteration of this exhibition explores the impact that migration has on the people and places that get left behind. Join us for the opening on Thursday, September 8, from 6 to 8pm.

Migration has always been a part of human existence. Notwithstanding, the extent to which people migrate from their country of origin has increased dramatically. According to the International Organization for Migration ([IOM World Migration Report 2020](#)), as of June 2019 the number of international migrants was estimated to be almost 272 million globally, 51 million more than in 2010. For countries of origin, the impact of this exodus is often overshadowed by the promise of a new homeland. As a result, origin stories become difficult to recall and opportunities for sustained community building back home

are diminished. The artists in this exhibition deal with this murky, liminal space in different ways. Inherited garments, photographs, sand, rubber tires, water and the vernacular of a people make their way into the work, chronicling lives and experiences left behind.

About The Artists

Demetri Burke is based in Atlanta, Georgia. Burke's work in the exhibition is an extension of his exploration into issues related to identity and culture. With collaged patterns from his grandmother's archive of upholstery, lipstick, and old photographs, Burke builds a connection to his family's migration narrative which begins with the middle passage. Burke has participated in several group exhibitions throughout the United States including "Expanding Narratives", Nichols Gallery, Atlanta, GA, curated by Derek Nichols (2022), "Like Wildflowers", NYC Culture Club, New York, NY, curated by Emma Kalea (2022), "The Next Hundred Years", Southwest Arts Center, Atlanta, GA, curated by rEM Dillard and Tracy Murrell (2021), "demos/desires", Melanie Flood Projects, Portland, OR, curated by Clifford Prince King (2021), "do it (home)" YoungArts Online Exhibition, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist (2020), and AXA Art Prize Juried Exhibition, New York Academy of Art, New York, NY, juried by Ian Alteveer, Lauren Haynes, Brett Littman, Eugenie Tsai (2020). Burke received a BFA in Studio Art from Georgia State University.

Ryan Cosbert is an African-American conceptual artist (of Haitian & Guyanese descent). Cosbert's work approaches and focuses on her personal experiences, self-expression, political issues and historical narratives. She is interested in the consequences of subjugation and oppression along with their historical and generational impact on the Black community. By including a mixture of sand from Guyana and Haiti in her work, Cosbert brings together time and space - three homelands and millions of years that mark the formation of the sand. The geometrically balanced compositions in her work stems from memories of the patterned floors and ceilings in her childhood home. Cosbert gains a sense of control using the square, grid format throughout her work to apply what she calls "tiles" which create a geometrical balance. She forms different layers using the tiles, paints, and physical objects giving the work more depth and a three-dimensional composition. Cosbert has a BFA in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts in New York City, where she currently lives and works.

Kim Dacres Signals a connection to Africa and migration through hair by creating three dimensional busts out of found tires and rubber. In a nod to the historical significance of African braiding patterns and techniques, Dacres's sculptures are manipulated and coiffed with braids. She emphasizes the facial expressions and hair styles of each piece to capture some of their charisma and celebrate their Blackness while also considering who is entitled to space and deserving of honorifics and monuments. She is attracted to discarded rubber because of the color, smell, and the material's symbolism which is imbued with a wealth of experience paired with wear, tear, and sudden disregard. Through the process of layering the materials, the rubber's journeying experience transforms into muscle, bone, skin, hair, and personal style. Her work considers the texture of experiences unique to Black People and women and the fragments of their experiences that shape a world view.

Dacres has participated in several group shows internationally and within the United States. Her most recent solo exhibition, *Black Moves First*, an installation of eight sculptures honoring her maternal family lineage, opened at Gavlak Gallery in Palm Beach in December 2021. Her work has also appeared at: Bradley Ertaskiran Gallery, Quebec, Canada; Galleria Anna Marra, Rome, Italy; Lustwarande, Tilburg, Netherlands; Marcus Garvey Park, Harlem, New York; A.I.R Gallery, Brooklyn, New York; Gavlak Gallery, Los Angeles, California and Palm Beach, Florida; REGULARNORMAL, New York, New York; Parallax Art Center, Portland, Oregon; UTA Artist Space Gallery, Beverly Hills, California; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California.

Dacres was born in the Bronx to Jamaican immigrants. She received her Bachelor's degree in Art Studio and Political Science with a minor in Africana Studies from Williams College and her Master's degree in Education focusing on Teaching English as a Second Language K-12 from Lehman College at the City University of New York. Kim spent ten years teaching and leading in New York City elementary and middle schools. Dacres lives in Harlem and practices her studio work in the Bronx.

Meron Engida creates vibrant tableaus that act as a vehicle for exploring the artist's personal experiences and Ethiopian cultural identity. Through trust in the mark-making process, Engida has developed a rich visual vocabulary which draws influence from the colors and narratives of ancient Ethiopian art. At the intersections of abstraction and figuration, Engida's works center a cast of expressive figures who together tell stories of vulnerability, empowerment, and resilience. Fusing memory and imagination, Engida layers tones, symbols, and motifs to construct emotive scenes intended to prompt dialogue about migration diversity and women's experiences. Meron has a BFA in Fine Art from Addis Ababa University School of Fine Arts and Design. She currently lives and works in Washington, DC.

Renluka Maharaj was born in Trinidad and Tobago. She lives and works between Colorado, New York City and Trinidad. Working with photography, installations, research and travel, Maharaj's work, which is often autobiographical, investigates themes of history, migration, memory, religion, gender, and how they inform identity. Her work in the show includes a combination of printing techniques paired with photography, painting and textiles, inspired by indentured laborers from India who worked on sugar plantations in the West Indies during the 1800s. The imagery is grounded in sourced composite portraits photographed during the 19th century.

Maharaj completed her BFA at the University of Colorado Boulder and her MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she received the Barbara De Genevieve Scholarship. Her work has been recognized with awards including Fellowships from: Vermont Studio Center, Fountainhead Residency and Virginia Center For Creative Arts.

Na'ye Perez (he/him) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Brooklyn, New York. Through his paintings, drawings and socially engaged performances, his work explores themes of community, shared experiences, identity, and accessibility. He has shown work in solo and group exhibitions nationally at RegularNormal Gallery, NY; Community Folk Art Center at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY; 129 Studio Gallery, Columbus, Ohio, Residency Gallery, LA, California. His residencies include New Wave, West Palm Beach, FL; The Shed's DISOBEY and Pratt Forward, both in NY. Perez holds an MFA from Pratt Institute.

Omar E. Saad is an Afro-Arab photographer. Through his practice, which is at the intersection of painting as well as digital and analog photography, Saad relies on the expansiveness of abstraction to explore ideas related to memory, longing and the disconnect that comes with returning to a place that no longer feels like home. Saad holds an MFA in photography from Pratt Institute. He currently lives and works in Somerset, New Jersey.

Khari Turner was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is based in New York. His paintings address issues related to slavery and systemic racism through the convergence of abstraction with parts of the Black body. Salt water, sourced from rivers and oceans around the world, is an important element in Turner's work and is used to emphasize the symbolic history it embodies as a means of transporting Africans during the middle passage. As a universally understood substance, water provides an entry point for a broader audience to engage with Turner's work. In addition to salt water, he utilizes fresh water, ink, acrylic and carbon in his work. As each medium breaks down and chemically reacts to the

other, lines, veins and splotches are created further obscuring parts of the body. Turner is intentional about omitting eyes. This act is intended to represent the collective experiences of people of color.

Khari has an MFA from Columbia University. Selected solo exhibitions include *As Below & Above*, CFHILL, 2022; Khari Turner "BLUE MOON" as part of ECC Venice Biennale, 2022; *Personal Structures: Reflections*, Ross-Sutton Gallery; *Saving Space 4 More*, Destinee Ross-Sutton x FREVO x Khari Turner, Ross-Sutton Gallery, 2021.

Cyle Warner is an artist from Nanuet, NY, and of Afro-Caribbean descent. Warner works across mediums, often using materials inherited from his family to explore his concept of Dis (This), which is an infinite, rhizomatic approach to history and a nod to Caribbean vernacular. Currently, he lives and works in Manhattan, NY, while attending the School of Visual Arts, working towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography with honors, and is expected to graduate in 2023. Recently Warner completed a residency at Yale Norfolk School of Art in Norfolk, Connecticut as part of the 2022 cohort.

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Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11:00am-5:00pm

Caption and Courtesy Information:

Cyle Warner, *Learning to Play #2*, 2022, Archival Inkjet Print Collage with Masking Tape on Hahnemuhle paper Edition 1 of 2 + 1 AP, 20 x 20 inches, (50.8 x 50.8 cm)

Courtesy the artist and Welancora Gallery

Photo: Cary Whittier