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Aliona Ortega Fine Art

presents

WALL | STREET

Works by Jorge Enrique, Miss.Tic, Purvis Young



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May 5 - June 24, 2023

Aliona Ortega Fine Art | Miami - Paris

MIAMI (May 20) – Aliona Ortega Fine Art has opened its inaugural exhibition **Wall | Street: Works by Jorge Enrique, Miss.Tic, Purvis Young**, that remains on view through June 24th, 2023 at the gallery in Wynwood. We celebrate a name change with the opening of “**Wall | Street**”. Gallery Director Aliona Ortega is pleased to announce that the gallery – formerly **Waltman Ortega Fine Art**, a contemporary gallery in the Wynwood district of Miami for more than a decade, has now officially changed its name to **Aliona Ortega Fine Art**.



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The street is both setting and subject of the exhibition **Wall | Street**, which presents paintings, photography, sculpture, and site-specific interventions by three important contemporary artists: Cuban-born Miami-based artist **Jorge Enrique** (USA, lives in Miami, b. Cuba 1957), renowned Paris graffiti artist **Miss.Tic** (Paris, France 1956-2022), and self-taught “street” artist **Purvis Young** (USA, Miami, Florida 1943-2010).

Walls and streets were our first canvases. From the Paleolithic cave paintings of Lascaux in France, to the Roman street graffiti of Pompeii, humans have been writing, drawing, and painting on walls and streets since the beginning of time. Today’s artists continue that practice.

The impact and efficacy of walls and street surfaces form the framework of a nonlinear narrative, offering open and changing interpretations.

The images in **Wall | Street** are charged with an enigmatic power to stir up curiosity and the desire to know and see more. Often pre-existing, found, modified and arranged, the constituent elements of each piece conjure up a familiar reality tinged with strangeness, allowing us to glimpse something beneath the surface of the exhibition – something about consciousness, conflict, control, and memory.

Overlapping, spreading out, effacing, stacking, layering, and juxtaposing in a manner that is both visible and invisible, these artworks collectively suggest notions of seriality, reproduction and repetition, fragmentation and decay, social stratification and resistance. From signs to clues, from reflections to connections, **Wall | Street** outlines the vague contours of an elusive image of our shared humanity.

Like mirrors of an ever-changing urban landscape, these works reflect where we come from, and what we accept as facts and feelings. We see autobiography, art history, poetry, psychology and philosophy in these streets and on these walls. Each work is also a window framing a snippet of time – a contemporary picture window or viewing portal – a visual and literary trope used by artists for centuries.



Jorge Enrique
(USA / b. Cuba, 1957)
"No. 9", Numbers series, 2007
Mixed Media (fresco / acrylic on
wood), 60x36x3 in.

The artworks selected by Gallery Director Aliona Ortega for **Wall | Street** are all personal favorites. The settings, the surfaces, the stenciled silhouettes – both classical and contemporary – are integral to each work. Each reveals something familiar to the viewer. In doing so, each artwork captures something of the essence of the neighborhoods in which we live. This is art with a social message, and the persistence to question a world built of walls and streets.

We see this in **Jorge Enrique's** use of familiar abstract signs and marks – scrapes and scratches, abraded, stenciled numbers, imprinted rubbings from street drainage grids, manhole covers, and the industrial detritus of cities. There are catches of recognizable textures. We see tire tread marks, and industrial embossed aluminum diamond plate patterns: familiar forms whose repetition may at first appear meaningless and ubiquitous. But this is the language of our urban landscape, unquestioned or analyzed.



Jorge Enrique
(USA / b. Cuba, 1957)
"Window #2", "Off the Wall" series,
2011
Mixed media on panel
60x 48 x 3 in.

Through the elemental act of infusing pigments into a wet substrate, Enrique's paint, surfaces and content fuse, thus becoming a single layered entity. The artist controls the technical process, yet an element of serendipity emerges in the unpredictable reaction between pigments as they dry. Paint and polymer resins often rebelliously drip over the edges of Enrique's works, suggesting continuity beyond the confines of their edges. These works are distilled abstractions of civilization's essential marks. Expressed in purely painterly terms, Enrique's artwork addresses constructs of power, cultural consumption, and the relational problems of real life.



Miss.Tic (1956-2022, Paris, France)
Redouter Ce Qu'On Soumaïte
Souhaïter Ce Qu'On Redoute
(Fear what We Remember
Remembering What We Fear)
Silver gelatin print on aluminum
Ed. of 10, 160x120 cm | 63x 47 ¼ in

The same interest with mankind's traces and markings are seen in the powerful narrative images of Parisian poet/artist **Miss.Tic**. Considered one of the pioneers of street art in France, Miss.Tic's work both questions and embraces an intense theoretical dialogue that combines installation, conceptual games, self-conscious texts and appropriated imagery from the culture at large. *"The wall is the territory of my poems. It is my publisher,"* said Miss.Tic.

Confronted on the street by Miss.Tic's artwork, the viewer encounters an unexpected narrative of provocative imagery and text. In 2000, she pushed the history of art into the streets of Paris with her *Muses et Hommes (Muses and Men)* project. She appropriated nineteen masterpieces of Western art history – including Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, and Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* – stenciling them onto Paris streets, and tagging them with her witty feminist epigrams. Her famous stenciled images of the 1980s and '90s are long gone from Paris's streets today, but live on through her powerful documentary photographs. These large-format works constitute a photographic essay on cultural appropriation, the representation of women through history and art, gender inequality and the stereotyping of women as sexual objects and subordinates. *"I don't confess, I declare myself... One night at the wall, I refused with my eyes open what others accept with their eyes closed."*



Miss.Tic (1956-2022, Paris, France)
Femmes Passives Femmes Faciles
Elles Ont Bon Dos
(Passive Females, Easy Females. They
Have Good Backs)
Silver gelatin print on aluminum
Ed. of 10, 160x120 cm | 63x 47 ¼ in



Purvis Young
(USA, Miami, Florida 1943-2010)
My Peoples in the Streets, circa 1988
Acrylic, oil, ballpoint pen ink and pencil on
paper laid on found wood
22 x 24 in.

Prolific self-taught Miami artist **Purvis Young** was also a storyteller of the streets. *“I paint reality – I paint the problems of the world.”* Painting on everything from construction site trash and found wood to broken furniture and discarded books, Purvis Young transformed the debris of our throw-away society into compelling artworks which reverberate with inner city realities and the struggles of African-Americans, political and cultural history, storytelling and spirituality.

Young’s visual poetry is drawn from the plight of the underprivileged, racism in America, urban strife and African-American experiences. Young painted what he saw in the world – soaring interstate highway overpasses, ghetto streets, angry protests, funeral processions, struggle and violence.



Purvis Young
(USA, Miami, Florida 1943-2010)
Marchin' In Overtown, circa 1998
House paint on found wood
12 x 47 in.

We all see the world through the prism of our own experience. The artworks in **Wall | Street** attempt to enable us to see more clearly things that are right before our eyes, but are often obscured by daily familiarity. The organic chaos that surrounds us takes on an ordered energy and elegance here: Jorge Enrique’s obsessive lines and abraded numbers; Miss.Tic’s political and passionate muses; Purvis Young’s rhythmic street elegies and celebrations. Here is the rich reality of modern life. Here is the world in which we live. These artists’ voices awaken us to the power of the gritty “truth,” as well as the insistent beating heart, of **Wall | Street**.

Wendy M. Blazier
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Wendy M. Blazier is an art historian, writer and independent curator active in South Florida for more than 40 years.