

HUTCHINSON MODERN & CONTEMPORARY

FREDDY RODRÍGUEZ

Freddy Rodríguez (born 1945, Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros, Dominican Republic – lives and works in New York)

Freddy Rodríguez was born in 1945 in Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros, Dominican Republic. Feeling his life was in danger due to the local political climate, he moved to New York City in 1963. Rodríguez proceeded to study painting under artists such as Carmen Cicero (b. 1926) and John Dobbs (1931-2011) at the Art Students League and at the New School for Social Research. He also studied textile design at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

While Rodríguez's early artistic experiments engaged with minimalism and geometric abstraction, by the 1980s he had become more interested in realism and abstract expressionism. Eventually, the artist began fusing conceptual and stylistic elements from New York School painting with Dominican history, Caribbean culture, and transnational issues – using geometry and color to reference subjects generally considered at odds with pure formalism. Themes addressed within Rodríguez's work include the conquest and colonization of native people by Europeans, the figure of the "cimarrón," Catholicism, the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, and baseball. His work often takes the form of serial projects.

Over the course of his career, Rodríguez has received numerous grants and fellowships, such as: the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (SARF), 2016; the Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship, 2007 and 1995; the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation Grant, 2000; and the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, 1990.

The artist's work can be found in various prestigious public and private collections, including: the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; El Museo del Barrio, New York; National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.; The Newark Museum; Jersey City Museum; Queens Museum of Art; Bronx Museum of the Arts; and the Museo de Las Casas Reales, Santo Domingo, among others.

Rodríguez's work has been shown in numerous group and individual exhibitions, including: *The Illusive Eye*, El Museo del Barrio, New York (2016); *Caribbean Art at the Crossroads of the World*, Pérez Art Museum, Miami (2014); *Our America: The Latino Presence in American Art*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. (2013); *Unpredictable*, Instituto Cervantes, Tokyo (2013); *¡Merengue! Visual Rhythms*, El Museo del Barrio, New York (2006); *This Skin I'm in: Contemporary Dominican Art from El Museo del Barrio's Permanent Collection*, El Museo del Barrio, New York (2006); *America's Pastime: Portraits of the Dominican Dream, Works by Freddy Rodriguez*, The Newark Museum (2005); *Lfactor*, Exit Art, New York (2003); and *En Esta Casa Trujillo es el Jefe*, Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo (2000).

Most recently, Rodríguez has pursued a series of paintings that explore the history, value, and symbolic nature of gold in art and society. The result of this work culminates in the exhibition, *La Fiebre del Oro*, held at the Museo Ralli in Santiago, Chile, from October 2 through December 15, 2019. The artist is also featured in a chapter written by Stephanie Lewthwaite in Dirk Gottsche's *Memory and Postcolonial Studies: Synergies and New Directions: Volume 9 of Cultural Memories* (2019), and is included in Mariel Brown and Melanie Archer's upcoming survey *A to Z of Caribbean Art*. Rodríguez is also the subject of a forthcoming monograph by E. Carmen Ramos which is part of the *A Ver: Revisioning Art History* book series published by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center.