



**Gapar Aitiev Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts
Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek**

UNIVERSE AS EXPERIENCE

A solo show by Vargas-Suarez Universal

Curated by Georgy Mamedov

January 20 – February 4, 2022

Opening on January 20 at 15:00

Vargas-Suarez Universal is an internationally recognized American contemporary artist primarily known for large-scale murals, paintings, drawings, textile works and sound recordings. Born in Mexico City in 1972 and raised in Houston, Texas, he has been living and working between New York City and Bishkek for the last seven years, where he studies traditional textile techniques and collaborates with local artisans. **Universe as Experience** is the artist's premier solo show in Kyrgyzstan; the two-part 2022 exhibition will open at the Gapar Aitiev National Museum of Fine Arts, in the country's largest and most prestigious art institution.

Universe as Experience features Vargas-Suarez's most recent works and includes a selection of paintings, drawings, collages and works on paper. The exhibition will also feature a wall-size projection of the short documentary "Powers of Ten and the Relative Size of Things in the Universe" (1977). This Charles and Ray Eames classic was commissioned by IBM and captured the imagination of the artist as an elementary school student in 1979 in and in many ways informed his experimental creative method of exploring space, time and technology through art.

Vargas-Suarez shares with early 20th century pioneers of Abstraction a drive to capture reality beyond human perceptive capacity. The scale of the Universe, both in its macro and micro dimensions, from the most distant galaxies to the quarks, is beyond human experience. These foundational elements of the matter are available to us only as abstract notions. The artist sources scientific and technical data collected from international spaceflight and astronomy programs, aerospace architecture, structural blueprints, and satellite photography of outer space for his multimedia artistic practice. Relying on his background in Astrophysics, Vargas-Suarez Universal uses the powers of art - color, shape, and texture – to translate the abstract into concrete. In his practice the artist blurs the boundaries between art and design, between reality and invention, between the world as we see it and its scientific modeling, thus offering us a rare and unique perspective of the Universe as experience.

Vargas-Suarez Universal has participated in solo and group exhibitions in the United States and across Latin America, Europe, and Central Asia. His work can be found in numerous private and

public collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art Library, El Museo del Barrio, the Brooklyn Museum, the Queens Museum, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, TX, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León in León, Spain, and Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art in Moscow, Russia. He has conducted post-studio research at NASA Ames Research Center, Mountain View, CA; Arecibo Observatory, Puerto Rico; Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral, FL; Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX; Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center, Korolyov, Russia; and the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

The two-part retrospective of Vargas-Suarez in Bishkek is curated by **Georgy Mamedov**, an independent curator, cultural writer and assistant professor of film and media arts at the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) and supported by **Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary**, a New York City based gallery which specializes in modern and contemporary art of the Americas, with a focus on Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx art.

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