University Museums & Modlin Arts Present

Héctor Coco Barez

Laberinto del Coco

featured in
Action & Reaction: Looking at the Art of Social Justice

Monday, February 22, 2021 | 7:00pm

ARTIST CONVERSATION

Following the multimedia presentation, Héctor Coco Barez will join Elizabeth Schlatter, deputy director and curator of exhibitions of University Museums and Shannon Hooker, assistant director of the Modlin Center for the Arts for a moderated discussion about his music (Afro Puerto Rican bomba), his creative process and inspiration, and the inherent themes of social justice addressed in his work.

ABOUT THE PRESENTATION

Richmond-based musician Héctor Coco Barez offers a specially recorded performance as part of the University Museums exhibit Action & Reaction: Looking at the Art of Social Justice. Co-commissioned by University Museums and the Modlin Center for the Arts, the film features an original composition and performance both created by Barez with the collaboration of twelve musicians and artists in Puerto Rico, where he is based during the pandemic. The film, shot following local safety protocols, is made in collaboration with a recording studio and video crew in the artist’s home city.

The film explores folkloric traditions and contemporary interpretations of bomba, a distinctly Puerto Rican drum, song, and dance tradition of the African diaspora that has become one of the keys to Puerto Rican identity. Barez uses bomba to voice freedom, individuality, and cultural affirmation. Bomba is considered to be the main vehicle that expresses the African presence in Puerto Rico’s culture.

This performance is made possible in part with generous support from the Louis S. Booth Fund for the Arts, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, and the Cultural Affairs Committee.
ABOUT THE PRESENTATION

Héctor Coco Barez drew artistic inspiration from this year’s University Museums exhibitions, *Memories & Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art* and *Action & Reaction: Looking at the Art of Social Justice*. Included in this program are two poignant pieces that Barez directly referenced during his creative process of developing the work for this performance.

**Memories & Inspiration Virtual Museum Tour**

_Virtually walk through_ a 360-degree tour of the *Memories & Inspiration* exhibition.

---


Stefanie Jackson (American, born 1958), *Exodus*, 2004, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches, © Stefanie Jackson
**Action & Reaction: Looking at the Art of Social Justice**

**University Museums Exhibit**

Through May 23, 2021, currently open to the campus community only

The topics of social justice, resistance, and solidarity, are addressed by the artworks, by the artists themselves and how they are present in their work, and by the viewers. Included in the exhibition are more than 80 historical and modern artworks from the University Museums’ permanent collection, with highlighted presentations of the work of Judy Chicago, Avel de Knight, and Danny Lyon. A special section in the exhibition addresses social justice today and features contemporary work by Miles Wilson, UR ’20, freelance photographer, and Sandy Williams, IV, interdisciplinary artist and part-time instructor of art, University of Richmond.

The exhibition is divided into four groupings, and each grouping presents a small selection of work by “anchor” artists that exemplify four themes: nationality and patriotism; protest, civil rights, and activism; personal activism, highlighting gender and identity; and social justice in contemporary society. Additional artworks by other artists supplement each section, further highlighting and exploring the themes.

**Virtual Museum Tour**

You can [virtually walk through](#) the Action & Reaction exhibition to view more than 80 historical and modern artworks from the University Museums’ permanent collection.

---

**MUSIC CREDITS**

**Danza Para Pupa**

Hector Coco Barez – composer, musical director, primo drum (*barril de bomba*)
Ama Rios – *barril buleador* (*bomba* drum)
Monika Nieves – *guicharo* (gourd scraper)
Andres “Kino” Cruz – cuá
Efrain Martinez – drums
Luis Marin – piano
Antonio “Toñito” Vazquez – trombone
Bryan Perez – bass

Cuarteto Tabonuco String Quartet:
Carolina Pons Martinez – violin
Olga Julia – violin
Lourdes Naomi Negron – viola
Gisela Rosa Colon – cello

Sound Engineer & Mix by Carlos Velazquez
Filmed & Video Editing by Maite Rivera Carbonell
Memorias

Hector Coco Barez – composer, musical director, primo drum (barril de bomba)
Ama Rios – singer, cuá
Monika Nieves – maraca
Andres Cruz – barril buleador (bomba drum)
Efrain Martinez – drums
Janice Maisonet – baritone sax
Kalani Trinidad – tenor sax
Pedrito Ruiz – trumpet
Antonio “Toñito” Vazquez – trombone
Bryan Perez – bass
Benson Pagan – electric guitar

Sound Engineer & Mix by Carlos Velazquez
Filmed & Video Editing by Maite Rivera Carbonell

El Dilema

Hector Coco Barez – composer, musical director, primo drum (barril de bomba)
Ama Rios – singer, cuá
Kiani Medina – singer (cantaora)
Monika Nieves – singer (cantaora)
Andres Cruz Buleador – drum (barril de bomba)
Efrain Martinez – drums
Janice Maisonet – baritone sax
Kalani Trinidad – tenor sax
Pedrito Ruiz – trumpet
Antonio “Toñito” Vazquez – trombone
Bryan Perez – bass
Benson Pagan – electric guitar

Cuarteto Tabonuco String Quartet
Carolina Pons Martinez – violin
Olga Julia – violin
Lourdes Naomi Negron – viola
Gisela Rosa Colon – cello

Sound Engineer & Mix by Carlos Velazquez
Filmed & Video Editing by Maite Rivera Carbonell

Recorded at Playbach Studio in San Juan, Puerto Rico December 10, 2020
ABOUT THE ARTIST

HÉCTOR COCO BAREZ

Born in Santurce, Puerto Rico, Héctor Coco Barez is one of the most active Puerto Rican percussionists of his generation. During his extensive career he has had the opportunity to represent the Island in both folkloric and popular music stages.

Barez received a B.A. in physical education from the University of Puerto Rico (UPR). He studied percussion at the UPR, the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico, and the Los Angeles College of Music in Pasadena, California. Nevertheless, Barez attributes his highest level of learning to the streets of Puerto Rico and its bomba and rumba percussionists such as La Familia Cepeda, Los Hermanos Ayala, Los Pleneros de la 23, Alfredo Rodríguez, Nicolás Lebrón, Paoli Mejías, Héctor Calderón, Víctor Emmanuelli, Samuel Gascot, and Raúl Rodríguez amongst others.

He was a member of the Ballet Folclórico Nacional de Puerto Rico “Areyto,” Pleni-bom, Los Pleneros de la 23 Abajo, Son del Batey, EL Bombazo de Puerto Rico de los Hermanos Emmanuelli, Taller Tamboricua, and Bataklán.

In 2017, Héctor Barez received a commission from the Puerto Rican Institute of Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts to create his own musical proposal which he entitled El Laberinto del Coco. In this unique journey he uses bomba, the oldest genre of music of African heritage in the island, as the rhythmic base that will condense all his experiences in music creating an exhilarating pathway between past and present times.

Barez, worked for eight years with the band Los de Atrás Vienen Conmigo, which accompanied the Puerto Rican rap duo Calle 13 for ten years. He recorded in four of the five GRAMMY Award®-winning productions of Calle 13. He has also had the opportunity to perform and record with artists such as Shakira, Alejandro Sanz, Maná, Don Omar, Bacilos, Bayanga, William Cepeda, Cultura Profética, Tamela Hedstrom, Diana Fuentes, Jerry Medina, Mikrowaves, Mekong Express, and Calma Carmona amongst others.

Based in Richmond, he is currently a member of his own salsa band Bio Ritmo and Miramar. Barez keeps a busy schedule touring with Miami-based band Bacilos and working on building El Laberinto del Coco 2021 Tour. Barez is a musician for the University of Richmond Department of Theatre & Dance, and an adjunct Latin percussion instructor at Virginia Commonwealth University. He also teaches and does workshops on Puerto Rican percussion all over the globe.

Sponsors: Meinl Percussion, Vic Firth Drumsticks, Remo Drum Heads, and Paiste Cymbals