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Contact:
press@gallerywendinorris.com

FIRELEI BÁEZ: *TRUST MEMORY OVER HISTORY*
ARTIST'S FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION IN SAN FRANCISCO OPENS JANUARY 27, 2016

Wednesday, January 27 at Gallery Wendi Norris
6–7PM: In Conversation | Firelei Báez and María Elena Ortiz, Assistant Curator
at the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM)
7–9PM: Opening Reception



Firelei Báez, Untitled, 2015, gouache, colored pencil and ink on paper, 70 1/2 x 61 1/2 inches

December 15, 2015 – San Francisco, CA – Gallery Wendi Norris is pleased to present *Trust Memory Over History*, artist Firelei Báez's first solo exhibition at the gallery and the first time her work will be presented publicly in San Francisco. The exhibition will open on Wednesday, January 27 with a discussion between Báez and María Elena Ortiz, Assistant Curator at the Pérez Art Museum Miami, followed by a public reception. It will be on view through March 5, 2016.

The works featured in *Trust Memory Over History* investigate socio-political movements of black resistance across the global diaspora. By illuminating underlying links between seemingly disparate

experiences, Báez traces shared iconographical systems of rebellion, ranging from the Latin American *azabache* social movement, to female resistance in 18th-century Louisiana, to 19th-century socialism, to the 1960s civil rights movement in the United States. On view will be paintings and drawings made this year, including select works from the artist's recent solo exhibition at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art as well as new portraits and works from her ongoing series titled *Carib's Jhator*.

Báez's vibrantly-colored gestural paintings on paper and linen depict female subjectivity in its varied forms, through the tropes of patterned textiles and ornamented bodies. *Patterns of Resistance*, a large scale painting on paper, features a crumpled piece of what appears to be blue-and-white colonial toile wallpaper. Upon careful study, it becomes apparent that the imagery is in fact an amalgam of contrasting symbols. In her portrait series, Báez uses outlines of her own silhouette to communicate the figure of the everywoman, who has no discernible features beyond omniscient eyes that directly confront the onlooker. The *Carib's Jhator* works are wildly colorful and patterned figurative paintings. "Jhator" refers to the Tibetan Buddhist sky burial, the ultimate bodily release; here, Báez presents an imagined Caribbean version.

ABOUT FIRELEI BÁEZ

Born in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic, Firelei Báez received a B.F.A. from The Cooper Union's School of Art in 2004, participated in The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2008, and later received an M.F.A. from Hunter College in 2010. She has held residencies at The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace, The Lower East Side Print Shop and The Bronx Museum's Artist in the Marketplace. Exhibitions of her work include *Bloodlines* at the Pérez Art Museum Miami (on view through March 6, 2016); Prospect 3 Biennial; *A Curious Blindness* at the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University; and *Concealed: Selections from The Permanent Collection*, Studio Museum in Harlem, NY. Baez's work has been written about in *The New York Times*, *The LA Times*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *New American Paintings*, *The Huffington Post* and *Studio Museum Magazine*. In addition, she was a recipient of the prestigious Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award as well as the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Award in Painting. Báez is also the recipient of the 2016 Chiaro Award, a fully sponsored artist residency for an accomplished mid-career painter residing in the U.S., given annually by the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, California.

In 2015 The Pérez Art Miami Museum published *Firelei Báez: Bloodlines*, with an introduction by Franklin Sirmans, an essay by Assistant Curator María Elena Ortiz, an interview with Naima Keith and a contribution by writer Roxane Gay.

ABOUT GALLERY WENDI NORRIS

Gallery Wendi Norris presents both a contemporary and Modern program that showcases a variety of artists working over many geographic locations and in a wide array of media. The gallery, located in downtown San Francisco, often shows two exhibitions simultaneously in order to encourage a re-contextualization of work by Modern artists while providing connections with the contemporary. Gallery Wendi Norris is active locally as well as internationally, working with individual collectors and museums alike in both primary and secondary markets. Founded with an emphasis on scholarship and education, the gallery produces researched exhibition catalogues, sponsors artist talks, hosts visiting academics, and engages in local public art projects, among other initiatives. Learn more at gallerywendinorris.com.
