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## Firelei Báez *Patterns of Resistance*

Winner of the Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting  
September 25, 2015–January 16, 2016

**Artist walkthrough:** September 24, 7–8pm, Báez will talk about her work and practice within UMOCA's Street Gallery

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**UMOCA and the Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation announce Firelei Báez in her solo exhibition, *Patterns of Resistance*.**

The Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (UMOCA) and the Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation awarded the 2015 Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting to Brooklyn-based artist Firelei Báez. As the recipient of this prize, Báez will have a solo exhibition at UMOCA, giving the artist a new audience in the western region.

The Prize is awarded every two years to an emerging or mid-career painter whose work expresses a great range of talent and forward thinking within a contemporary idiom. With each passing year the Prize

gains momentum and acts as a launching pad for winners to excel their careers using the unrestricted 15,000 USD cash award to support their practice.

“The Constance & Jarvis Doctorow Family Foundation is proud to award the 2015 Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting to Firelei Báez. Catherine was an early supporter of the right to equality for women, African-Americans, immigrants and other dismissed or ignored segments of the world’s population. Firelei’s interpretation of the complex issues of resistance captivates the viewer with intricacy, color and flow,” says Suzanne Larson, daughter of Catherine Doctorow and Executive Director of the Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation. “We know Catherine would be delighted that her love of painting is creating an opportunity for exceptional artists to engage the minds of our community.”

Inspired by lineages of black resistance, Báez’s *Patterns of Resistance* fosters understandings of diasporic experiences. Her large-scale works on paper interweave the lives of 18th-century black women in Louisiana and the Cuban roots of the Latin American *azabache*, with symbols used in the US during the tumultuous 1960s.

Primarily focusing on female figures and their subjectivities, Báez’s paintings and drawings specifically depict textiles, hair designs, and body ornaments that link traditionally loaded symbols to individual human gestures. Through a labor-intensive process, Báez’s rich and elaborate compositions reveal new emblems of power that invoke disparate patterns of resistance within the African diaspora.

Born in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic, Firelei Báez received a BFA from The Cooper Union’s School of Art in 2004, participated in The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2008, and received an MFA 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. Her recent exhibitions include *Bloodlines* at the Pérez Art Museum, Miami (forthcoming 2015); *A Curious Blindness* at the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University (2015); *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*, New Orleans Biennial (2014); *Small*, curated by Claire Gilman, The Drawing Center, New York (2014). Her exhibition *Patterns of Resistance* at UMOCA will run from September 25, 2015 to January 16, 2016.

#### **About The Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation**

The Jarvis & Constance Doctorow Family Foundation (JCDF) was established as a charitable trust in New York City in 2004. The JCDF is committed to developing long-term relationships with non-profit organizations devoted to cultural activity in the performing, visual, and written arts and those that provide mental health services.

#### **About UMOCA**

The Utah Museum of Contemporary Art has been an award-winning aesthetic force and community leader since it was established in 1931. UMOCA encourages exploration into what it means to exist in today’s world through art that inspires imagination, stimulates thought, and transforms society.

UMOCA is a four-time recipient of funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation and is a 2015 recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts’ Art Works grant award.