

GUILD HALL

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Press Inquiries: 631.324.0806

Amy Kirwin, akirwin@guildhall.org

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ARTIST RENEE COX INAUGURATES NEWLY RENOVATED GUILD HALL GALLERIES WITH SOLO EXHIBITION

ORGANIZED BY MONIQUE LONG, *RENEE COX: A PROOF OF BEING* OPENS JULY 2 AND ON VIEW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 4, 2023



Renee Cox, *The Signing*, 2017. Digital chromogenic print. 48" x 84". © Renee Cox.

East Hampton, NY (May 18, 2023)—Guild Hall announced today that its newly renovated galleries will reopen on Sunday, July 2, featuring a solo exhibition by artist Renee Cox, organized by independent curator Monique Long. *Renee Cox: A Proof of Being* is a selection of the artist's most well-known and celebrated photographs from 1993 to the present. This survey will demonstrate how the artist's practice has evolved through a series of performative self-portraits. The avatars Cox creates are variably historical figures, art history tropes, cosmopolitan socialites, and Afro-centric superheroes—all imbued with sexual agency and resolute confidence.

"Renee Cox's intrepid gaze has been a part of the zeitgeist for nearly thirty years. Her work has been influential across disciplines including popular culture, music, fashion, and of course, visual art," shared Monique Long.

Renee Cox: A Proof of Being is comprised of selections from the artist's most recognizable bodies of work, including her groundbreaking *Yo Mama* series and her iconic photographs devoted to Jamaican national hero Queen Nanny. The exhibition will also feature the New York premiere of a recent work, an immersive video installation, *Soul Culture* (Courtesy of the artist and the Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh).

"Renee Cox's work underscores the importance of examining visual culture, and we are pleased to work with her along with Monique Long to present this survey of Renee's work as the first exhibition in our newly renovated galleries," said Guild Hall Director of Visual Arts, Melanie Crader.

Renee Cox (b. 1960, Colgate, Jamaica) is a visual artist, working foremost in photography and video. Her work arises at this intersection of history, race theory, and sexuality. In her practice, Cox works to deconstruct stereotypes, engage the viewer, and challenge their preconceived ideas about gender and race. She explores the possibilities of new and affirming self-representations for Black diasporic peoples as a visual corrective to both art history and history writ large—transforming dispossession into self-possession. By deconstructing the Black female body, she reveals the myths behind it.

Cox began her career as a commercial photographer, working for Condé Nast and the music and film industries. She turned to fine art after receiving an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in 1992. Since then, Cox has worked as a visual artist, educator, curator, lecturer, and a frequent contributor to the New York Times Magazine. The Archives of American Art (Smithsonian, Washington, D.C.) acquired Cox's personal archive in 2019. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Brooklyn Museum, and Princeton Art Museum, among others. She lives and works in Harlem, NY and Amagansett, NY.

Monique Long is an independent curator and writer based in New York City. Prior, she has held curatorial positions at institutions including the Museum of Arts and Design and The Studio Museum in Harlem. Her work focuses on themes related to race, identity, gender, class, and systems of power that are grounded in history, literature, and politics. Long is also a critic who has contributed essays and interviews on fashion and contemporary art to publications widely.

On July 9 at 1 PM, in conjunction with the exhibition, Renee Cox and photographer, historian, educator, and MacArthur grantee Deborah Willis discuss their work, shared interests, and the representation of the Black body. Visit guildhall.org for tickets.

Guild Hall's galleries will be open from Noon to 5 PM Thursday to Monday. Admission is free or pay what you can.

Lead Sponsors: Dorothy Lichtenstein, Fern and Lenard Tessler

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Museum programs are supported by Crozier Fine Arts, and funding from The Michael Lynne Museum Endowment, and The Melville Straus Family Endowment.

ABOUT RENEE COX

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American Art (Smithsonian, Washington, D.C.) acquired Cox's personal archive in 2019. Renee Cox (b. Colgate, Jamaica) lives and works in Harlem, NY and Amagansett, East Hampton. Her work is included in several institutional collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Princeton Art Museum.

reneecox.org

ABOUT MONIQUE LONG

Monique Long is an independent curator and writer based in New York City. Her work focuses on themes related to race, identity, gender, class, and systems of power that are grounded in history, literature, and politics. Long is also a critic who has contributed essays and interviews on contemporary art to publications widely. Her traveling exhibition, *Elegies: Still Lives in Contemporary Art*, premiered at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco last year. The show is currently on view at the Telfair Museum in Savannah, Georgia. Upcoming projects include *Renee Cox: A Proof of Being* and *Elizabeth Colomba: Mythologies*.

moniquelong.com

ABOUT GUILD HALL

Guild Hall is the cultural heart of the East End: a museum, performing arts, and education center, founded in 1931. We invite everyone to experience the endless possibilities of the arts: to open minds to what art can be; inspire creativity and conversation; and have fun.

Guild Hall has served four generations and introduced audiences to the most storied artists and performers of our time. Now as we approach our centennial, we have embarked on a state-of-the-art renovation to match the caliber of our artistry for twenty-first-century audiences. The facility-wide Capital Improvements Project & Campaign includes top-of-the-line physical and technological enhancements to better deliver on our mission as an artist-driven, interdisciplinary institution.

For more information about Guild Hall, please visit GuildHall.org.

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