

March 30, 2019

Press Release

KOTARO NUKAGA

KOTARO NUKAGA is pleased to present *FIXED CONTAINED*, a group exhibition of seven international contemporary artists: Brian Alfred, Firelei Báez, Inka Essenhigh, Nir Hod, Tony Matelli, Tomokazu Matsuyama, and Carlos Rolón. This exhibition is guest curated by Matsuyama, and will be on view from April 20, 2019 through June 29, 2019.

Each of the artists featured in *FIXED CONTAINED* samples ornamental aspects of visual material culture. Rather than merely using such elements for their patterned forms, the artists mix them in unique ways to create works that message the complexity of our times. Alfred's work features flat and abstracted lines in his paintings to illuminate the two-dimensional skeleton of urban views. Similarly, Essenhigh uses seemingly organic shapes and structures to create dream-landscapes for the viewer. While differing in mediums, both Báez and Matelli investigate the human form; Báez combines a variety of ornamental patterns that together form fluid portraits of strong spirits, and Matelli uses

the traditional mediums of marble and painted bronze to mash-up traditional statuesque forms with quotidian waste from our everyday. Rolón combines flat gold leaf or mirrored backgrounds with a foreground explosion of shapes and flowers reminiscent of bird and flower paintings from the Eastern painterly tradition. Hod creates shiny mirrored surface paintings that reflect back an abstracted version of the viewer to themselves. Matsuyama continues to fuse publicly recognizable elements of contemporary culture with traditional iconography to create a contemporary vision of the now.

The title of the exhibition, *FIXED CONTAINED*, references a potential contradiction between adapted or remixed objects, and the reality that the structures placed around such objects can be made fluid in order to provide for new meanings. The artists featured in this exhibition play with this tension by contesting the dichotomy between that which is non-functional adornment and that which is otherwise not. Taking these works entirely outside of the realm of the useful, these works instead point to the hybridity and complexity of the world we live in, by strategically sampling and further remixing these flat, ornamental patterns or elements. In doing so, each of these artists posits their own answer to the complex multi-layered world we inhabit. By expanding and, at times, exploding the 'contained' vessel, these artists clarify that the act of recombination not only requires deep knowledge of, and respect given to, the past, but may be one of the only ways to innovate in today's information-overladen society.

For more information, please see <https://www.kotaronukaga.com/en/projects/fixe-contained-en/>.

## ■Exhibition Outline

Title : *FIXED CONTAINED* curated by Tomokazu Matsuyama

Artist : Brian Alfred / Firelei Báez / Inka Essenhigh / Nir Hod / Carlos Rolón / Tony Matelli / Tomokazu Matsuyama

Date : April 20 Sat - June 29 Sat, 2019

Open Hours : 11:00~18:00 (Tue, Wed, Thu + Sat) 11:00~20:00 (Fri) ※Closed on Sun, Mon and National Holidays

Artist Talk : April 20 Sat, 2019 16:00~

Private View : April 20 Sat, 2019 18:00~

## ■Venue

KOTARO NUKAGA TERRADA Art Complex 3F, 1-33-10 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo, 140-0002, Japan

Access : 8 - minutes walk from Tokyo Waterfront Area Rapid Transit Rinkai Line "Tennoz Isle Station" B Exit

10 - minutes walk from Tokyo Monorail Haneda Airport Line "Tennoz Isle Station" South Exit

8 - minutes walk from Keikyu Line "Shinbanba Station" North Exit

3 - minutes walk from Toei bus "Tennozu bashi bus stop"

(Take the Toei bus 品 91 or 品 98 from "Shinagawa Station" Konan Exit )

## FIXED CONTAINED

Curated by Tomokazu Matsuyama

BRIAN ALFRED  
FIRELEI BÁEZ  
INKA ESSENHIGH  
NIR HOD  
CARLOS ROLÓN  
TONY MATELLI  
TOMOKAZU MATSUYAMA

APRIL 20 - JUNE 29, 2019

## ■ About the Artists



**Brian Alfred** lives and works in New York. Among many solo and group exhibitions, he has exhibited at Haunch of Venison, the Aichi Triennale, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Frist Center for Visual Art. His work is in many permanent collections, including SFMOMA, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.



**Firelei Báez** was born in Santiago de los Caballeros and lives and works in New York. She has exhibited widely, including at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, the Pérez Art Museum, Gallery Wendi Norris, the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, and The Warhol Museum. Her work can be found in permanent collections, including BNY Mellon Art Collection, the San Jose Museum of Art, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY.



**Inka Essenhigh** lives and works in New York. She has participated in many exhibitions, including at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Miles McEnery Gallery, the Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Baldwin Gallery, Columbus College of Art & Design, Canzani Center, and Pace Prints. Her work is in permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, MoMA, SFMOMA, the Tate Modern, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. She has an installation currently at The Drawing Center in NYC, and an upcoming show at Kavi Gupta Gallery.



**Nir Hod** was born in Tel Aviv and lives and works in New York. He has shown in many exhibitions, including at the Martin-Gropius-Bau Museum, The Bass Museum, Makasiini Contemporary Gallery, Gavlak Gallery, Michael Fuchs Gallery, Paul Kasmin Gallery, Jack Shainman Gallery, and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. His work and artistic practice are often featured in significant cultural publications including the New York Times, Interview Magazine and others.



**Carlos Rolón** lives and works in Chicago. Solo museum exhibitions include the Dallas Contemporary, Texas; the Bass Museum of Art, Miami; Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico; New Orleans Museum of Art and the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis. He has participated in group exhibitions at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Marta Herford Museum, Herford, Germany. Rolón represented the Ukraine at the 52nd Venice Biennale. His work is in the permanent collections of the Brooklyn Museum, New York; Daegu Museum of Art, South Korea; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; The Nerman Museum of Art, Kansas City; New Orleans Museum of Art; Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan, and the Pinchuk Art Centre, Kiev.



**Tony Matelli** was born in Chicago and lives and works in New York. He participated in many exhibitions, including at Marlborough Contemporary, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, the Selestat Biennale, and Emmanuel Perrotin Gallery. His work can be found in permanent collections including the ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, the Cranbrook Art Museum, the FLAG Art Foundation, the MIT List Visual Arts Center, and Museum Ludwig.



**Tomokazu Matsuyama** lives and works in New York. He has exhibited at Harvard University's Reischauer Institute, the Asian American Arts Centre in New York, the Katzen Arts Center at American University, and the Japan Society in New York, among other galleries and institutions. His work is in the permanent collections of Asian Art Museum (San Francisco), Microsoft Collection, Sharjah Bank Collection, Royal Family of Dubai, Point Leo Sculpture Park, and Nike.

## ■FEATURED KEY WORKS



Brian Alfred  
*Sky Tree View*  
Acrylic on canvas  
2018  
16 x 20 in



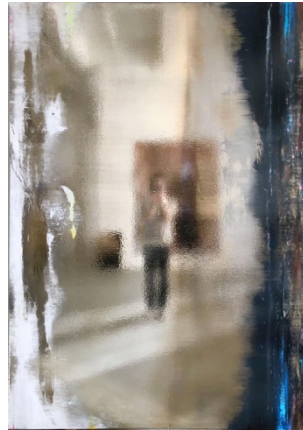
Firelei Báez  
*TBC (floating woman)*  
Acrylic on canvas  
2019  
43 x 45.5 in



Inka Essenhigh  
*TBC*  
Enamel on canvas  
2019  
32 x 24 in



Carlos Rolón  
*Gild the Lily (Caribbean Hybrid II)*  
Oil, ink, and 24kt gold leaf on linen  
2018  
72 x 54 in



Nir Hod  
*THE LIFE WE LEFT BEHIND*  
Oil paint under chromed canvas  
2019  
90 x 63 x 1.5 in



Tony Matelli  
*Bust*  
Concrete, painted bronze, painted urethane  
2019  
36 x 24 x 17 in



Tomokazu Matsuyama  
*Swell Being Yourself*  
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas  
2019  
103 x 73 x 1.5 in

## ■About KOTARO NUKAGA

Established in the fall of 2018, KOTARO NUKAGA endeavors to introduce Japanese and international contemporary artists to new audiences. In doing so, KOTARO NUKAGA exhibits works by artists who not only historically contextualize their work, but also pose questions about contemporary society. In their unique ways, these artists therefore challenge the viewer in various ways to see the world around them in a different light. Situated in TERRADA Art Complex in Tennoz, an area of Tokyo that has fast become a central location for contemporary art, KOTARO NUKAGA is NUKAGA GALLERY's fourth location.

Learn more at <https://www.kotaronukaga.com/en/>

## ■Press Contact Details

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