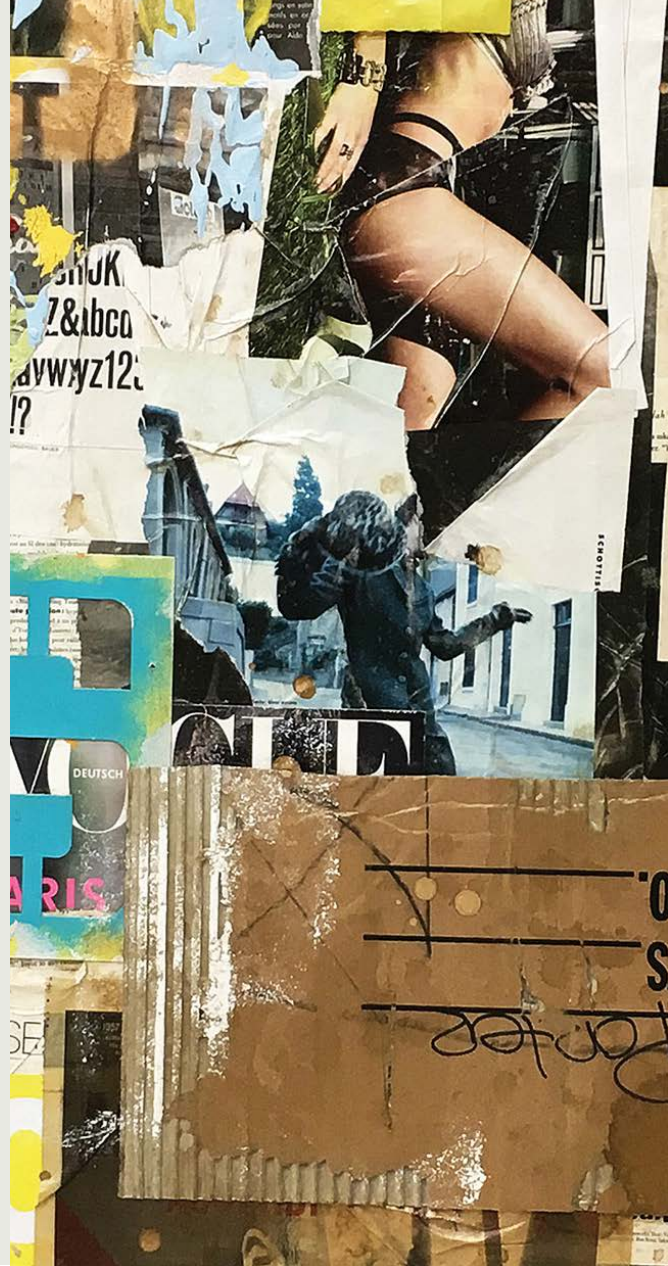


POETIC REFLECTION

Richard E. Peeler Art Center, DePauw University

January 26 – June 24, 2026

Samuel E Vázquez



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For inquiries about these works, please contact
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INTRODUCTION

Poetic Reflection is a retrospective exhibition presenting paintings, photographs, and artifacts by Samuel E Vázquez, tracing a career shaped by cultural crossings, material transformation, and the persistent dialogue between Puerto Rican and New York identities. Organized and sponsored by the Richard E. Peeler Art Center at DePauw University, the exhibition brings together works that span decades and mediums, offering a layered view of an artist whose practice has continually negotiated the tensions between visibility and marginalization, order and improvisation.

Born in Puerto Rico and raised in Harlem and East Harlem, Vázquez came of age during a moment when graffiti and hip-hop emerged not only as cultural movements but as essential forms of self-definition and resistance. These practices provided him with a visual and philosophical foundation rooted in rhythm, gesture, and reclamation. From the outset, his work has embraced the possibility of transformation—of asserting presence, of elevating what is overlooked, and of forging meaning from fragments of lived experience.

This sensibility extends across Vázquez’s studio practice. His assemblages repurpose wood, metal, paper, and other remnants of the everyday, reconfiguring materials often dismissed as refuse into works that carry dignity, energy, and purpose. In doing so, he aligns with a broader artistic lineage that has long challenged conventional hierarchies of material, imbuing the debris of modern life with renewed significance.

At the same time, Vázquez’s paintings pulse with movement and sound. Bold strokes, layered surfaces, and shifting fields of color evoke both the density of the city and the improvisational freedom of music. The rhythms of jazz and the pulse of hip-hop resonate throughout his abstractions, where spontaneity is held in balance with structure. These works function not only as formal explorations, but as meditations on identity, resilience, and memory spaces where personal and collective histories converge.

Across media, Poetic Reflection reveals an artist who has transmuted the urgency of the street and the remnants of the everyday into a refined and deeply considered visual language. The exhibition invites viewers into the space between chaos and order, where histories, Nuyorican, diasporic, and urban, are given form through color, material, and gesture.

BIOGRAPHY

Samuel E Vázquez (b. 1970, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is a contemporary visual artist. He has exhibited along-side Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell, Sam Gilliam, Sabina Klein, Sam Francis, Keith Haring, Torrick “Toxic” Ablack, and Futura 2000 among others.

Vázquez was a feature artist in special programming for Ai Weiwei: According to What? exhibition. His work is rooted in the New York City subway painting era of the 1970s and 80s and informed by the work of Ed Clark, Mimmo Rotella, Jacques Villeglé, Jackson Pollock, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My studio practice investigates humanity’s resilience to rise above social constructs. Through the use of diverse materials these investigations reveal the inner strength, often found in underserved communities, to thrive amid chaos. Via a rigorous process of applying layers of found materials and markings, my work evokes the effects of the systematic neglect that is thrust upon our supposedly insignificant inner city communities. In painting, I pursue abstract methods of home.





MORE ABOUT THE ARTIST

Samuel E Vazquez (b.1970, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is a contemporary visual artist. He has exhibited alongside Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell, Sam Gilliam, Sabina Klein, Sam Francis, Keith Haring, and Futura 2000 among others.

While growing up in New York City, starting in 1979, Samuel became captivated by the vibrant paintings covering the subways. Over the next few years, he fully immersed himself in the city's thriving youth culture, participating in style writing, breaking, music, and connecting with the Downtown art scene. This led Samuel to earn degrees from New York City College of Technology-CUNY and Herron School of Art and Design-Indiana University.

Vazquez was a featured artist in special programming for the Ai Weiwei: According to What? Exhibition at Newfields. His work is rooted in the New York City subway painting era of the 1970s and 80s and informed by the work of Ed Clark, Mimmo Rotella, Jacques Villegle, Jackson Pollock, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

ARTWORKS



#16



#198



Breaking All The Rules
And None Of The Rules



Expelled Lines Fair Safe On The
Brightest Satellites.



#519



#17



#199



Désireux Paix Éternelle



Remember When We Were
Waiting For This Day?



Newbold Ave



#106



Archer ST



Don´t Stop, Can´t Stop,
Won´t Stop



The Last Time Always
Feels Like The First Time.



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#16, 2017

Signed and dated verso
 Found materials, acrylic, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 72 x 72



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#17, 2017

Signed and dated verso
 Found materials, acrylic, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 72 x 72



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#106, 2018

Signed and dated verso
 Found materials, acrylic, ink, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 48 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#198, 2018

Signed and dated verso
 Found materials, acrylic, tape, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 12 x 11 7/8



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#199, 2018

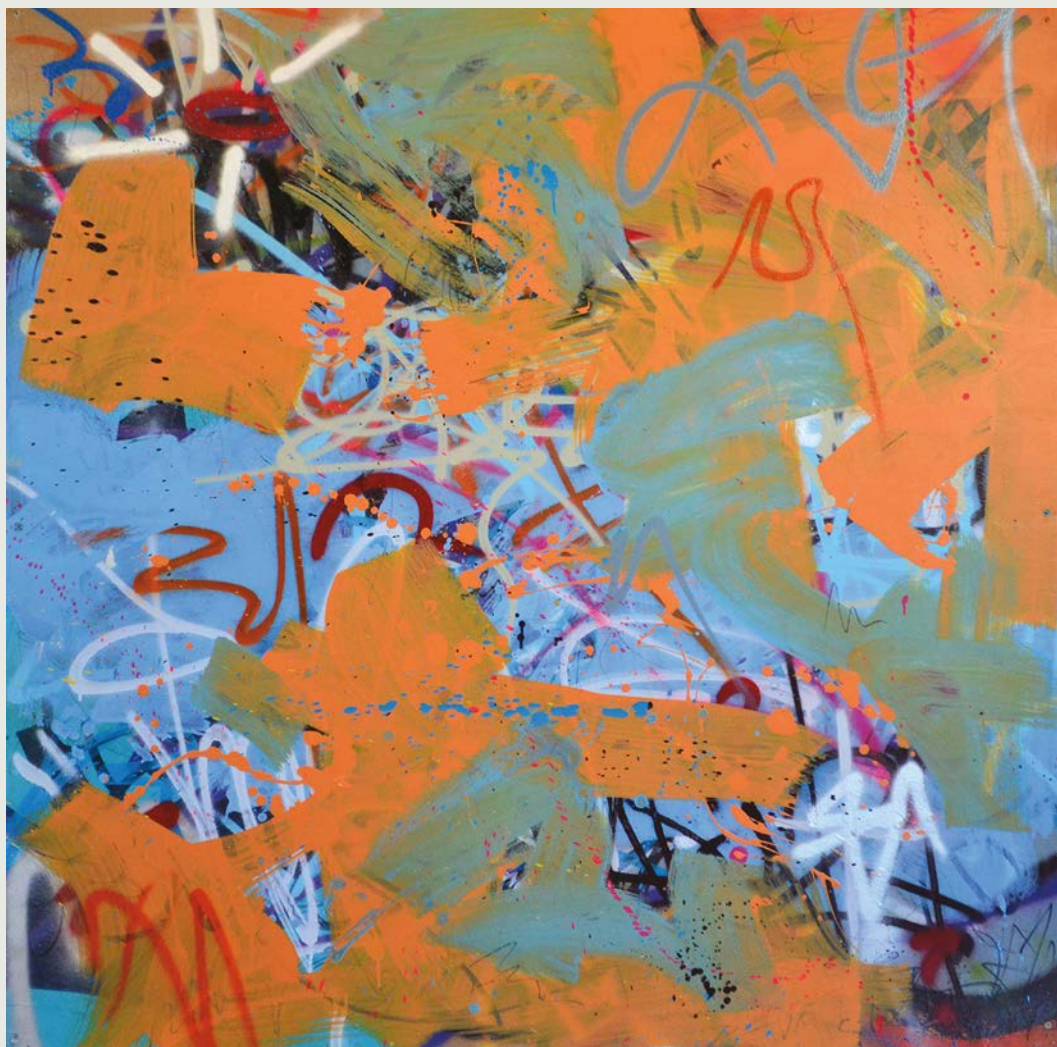
Signed and dated verso
 Found materials, acrylic, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 12 x 12 3/8



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Archer St., 2011

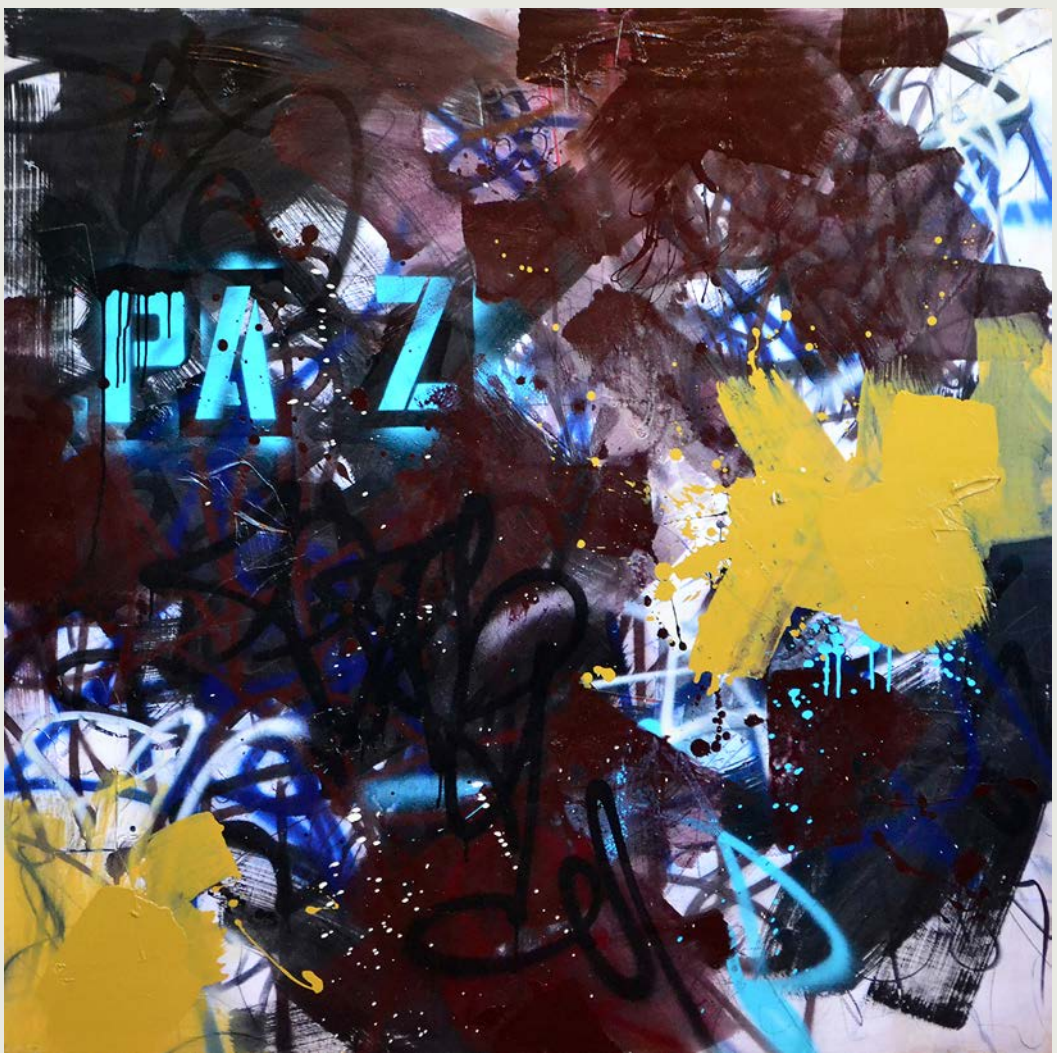
Signed and dated verso
 Acrylic, ink, dye, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 24 x 24



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Breaking All The Rules And None Of The Rules, 2015

Signed and dated verso
 Acrylic, graphite, oil stick, ink, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 48 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Désireux Paix Éternelle, 2015

Signed and dated verso
 Found material, acrylic, graphite, oil stick, ink, spray enamel, and latex on
 panel
 48 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Don't Stop, Can't Stop, Won't Stop, 2015

Signed and dated verso
 Acrylic, graphite, oil stick, ink, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 48 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Expelled Lines Fair Safe On The Brightest Satellites, 2012

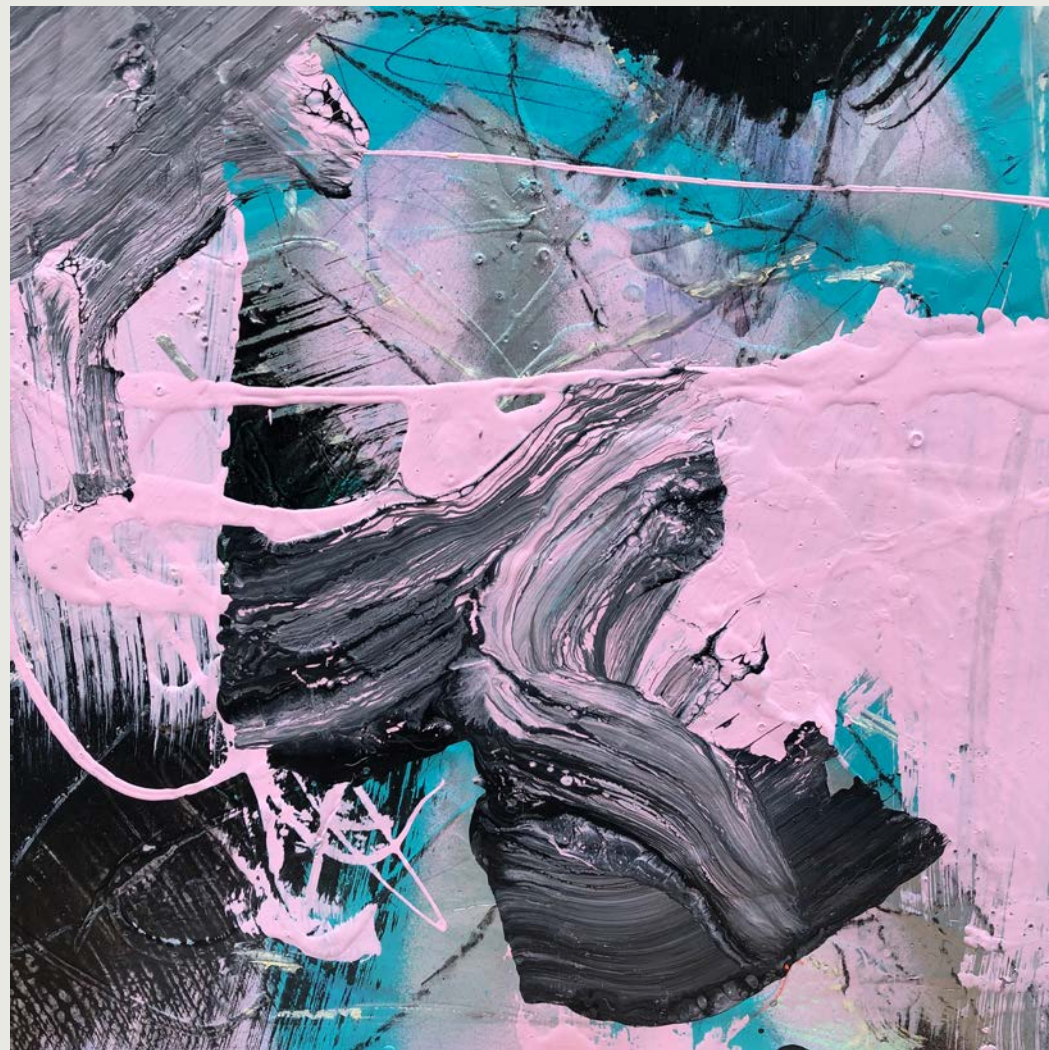
Signed and dated verso
 Acrylic, spray enamel, and latex on panel
 48 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Remember When We Were Waiting For This Day?, 2015

Signed and dated verso
Acrylic, graphite, oil stick, ink, spray enamel, and latex on panel
12 x 11 7/8



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

The Last Time Always Feels Like The First Time, 2015

Signed and dated verso
Acrylic, graphite, oil stick, ink, spray enamel, and latex on panel
11 7/8 x 12 3/8



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

#519, 2025

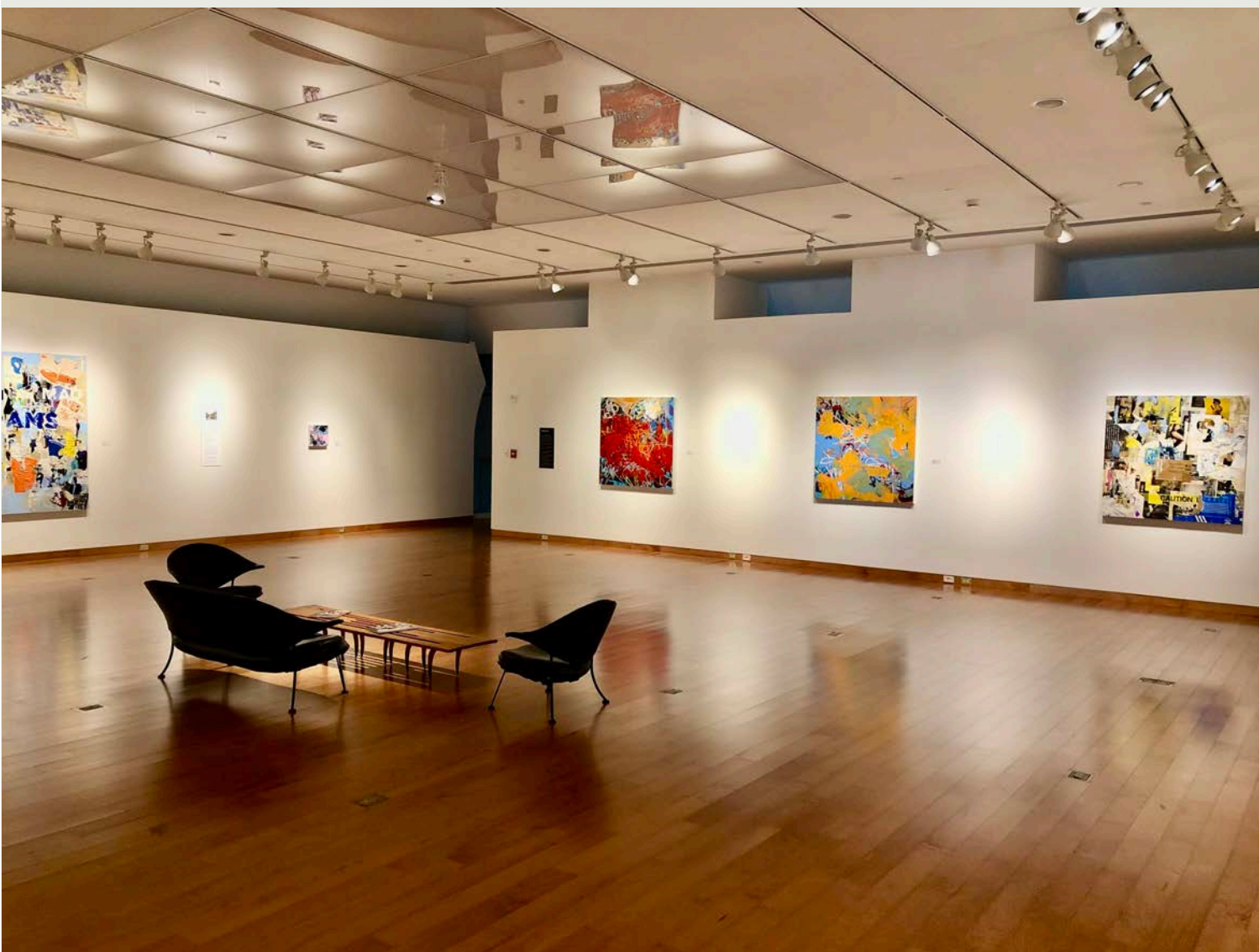
Signed and dated verso
Found materials, acrylic, ink, graphite, spray enamel, and latex on
panel
20 x 48



Samuel E Vazquez 1970 - Present

Newbold Ave, 2011

Signed and dated verso
Acrylic, graphite, ink, spray enamel, and latex on crate lid
53 1/4 x 55 1/4



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CSB Fine Arts extends its sincere gratitude to the Richard E. Peeler Art Center and DePauw University for organizing and presenting Poetic Reflection, a retrospective exhibition dedicated to the work of Samuel E Vázquez.

We are grateful to D. Lyle Dechant, Curator of Exhibitions and University Collections; Misti Scott, Outreach & Gallery Manager; Jerry Bates, Preparator, all of the Peeler Art Center; and Robert Dewey, Professor of History at DePauw University, for their leadership, support, and thoughtful stewardship of this exhibition. We also thank the entire Peeler Art Center team for their professionalism, care, and commitment in bringing this important project to life.

CSB Fine Arts is honored to represent Samuel E. Vázquez and to support this significant institutional moment in his career. We thank Samuel for his trust and for the generosity of his work, vision, and continued dialogue.

Our appreciation also extends to all collaborators, contributors, and visitors whose engagement and support make exhibitions such as this possible.

EXHIBITIONS

Long-Sharp Gallery
NVP - Contemporary Art Project
Van Der Plas Gallery
Indianapolis Art Center
Clowes Memorial Hall at Butler Art Center
Rapp Family Gallery at Indiana Landmarks Center
Indianapolis Museum of Art Galleries at Newfields
Indianapolis International Airport
Christel DeHaan Fine Art Center Gallery at University of Indianapolis
Gallery 924 at Arts Council of Indianapolis
The 646
Indianapolis Public Library Central Branch
Beard Art Center at Indiana Wesleyan University
Cultural Arts Gallery at IUPUI
The Lobby at Madam Walker Center
Bread of Life
Thruspace
Urban Element 2
Grace Gallery
CSB Fine Arts

ARTS & LECTURES

Bubbles & Tags, Jordan College of the Arts
Cultural Manifesto, NPR
Good Vibrations, WQRT
Indiana Arts Homecoming, Indiana Historical Society
Courageous Conversations, Indiana State Museum
Style & Frequency, Richard E. Peeler Art Center at DePauw University
Fresh Dressed, The Toby at Newfields
City as Canvas: New York City Graffiti from the 70s & 80s, Newfields
TILT: An Arts and Humanities Mixes, Gallery 924
From Subways to Gallery Walls, New York City
College of Technology-CUNY
Wrinkles of the City: La Havana, Heartland Film Festival
Clowes Conversations, Clowes Memorial Hall at Butler Arts Center
Style Wars: Ai Weiwei Edition, The Toby at Newfields
New York City 1980s, Cuyahoga Community College



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