

FRIEZE  
LONDON

SILVERLENS

*CARLOS VILLA*

11–15 October 2023  
Booth S7, The Regent's Park, London

# *CARLOS VILLA*

For Frieze London, Silverlens is pleased to present a solo booth of pioneering Filipino American modernist Carlos Villa (b. 1936 – d. 2013, USA). The presentation will mark the first time Villa's work has been shown in the United Kingdom and honors the ten-year anniversary of the artist's death.

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, Frieze has called on several renowned artists to nominate other artists to present solo projects in the invitation-only section. Artist nominators include Wolfgang Tillmans, Haegue Yang, Olafur Eliasson, Tracey Emin, Simone Leigh, and Anthea Hamilton. Silverlens was selected by Anthea Hamilton to present Villa's work.



Portrait of *Carlos Villa*, c. 1958

Carlos Villa was a Filipino American artist, grass-roots activist, curator, author, and 40+ year educator in the San Francisco Bay area. In 2022, Villa received the first-ever major museum retrospective in the United States dedicated to the work of a Filipino American artist, which toured across three venues.

Villa's enduring impact extends beyond his visual art. As an educator, he developed a renowned curriculum that merged critical race theory and active volunteerism, reimagining the role of contemporary artists. Over the years, he mentored students such as Kehinde Wiley, Iona Rozeal Brown, and Paul Pfeiffer, among many others. He additionally founded the highly influential symposia series "Sources of a Distinct Majority," which brought together community and cultural leaders. Esteemed speakers and collaborators included Angela Davis, bell hooks, Ruth Asawa, Martin Puryear, and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith. Through his multifaceted work, Villa aimed to challenge the established canon and rewrite history to honor those who have been marginalized.

Silverlens's presentation at Frieze London highlights Villa's body print works from the 1980s, in which he used his own body, hands, and face to create indexical marks on the canvas. Unlike Yves Klein, who utilized female models as printing tools, Villa foregrounded his own form, as though urging us to acknowledge his Filipino presence.<sup>1</sup> The canvases come alive with imprints of the artist, as if he himself is present in the room, even a decade after his passing.

In *Space Case* (1980), we see a neatly collaged grid of Villa's face atop a backdrop of body prints in cadmium red and grass green on the raw canvas. Though the lineage of Villa's practice "thrives on apparent disarray,"<sup>2</sup> here we see the structure of a grid among and within the multiplicities of his likeness.

In the mural-scaled painting *What Comes Again, Comes Again, Etc.* (1982), a field of blue and pink is encircled by three orange body prints. Smaller pieces of canvas are almost camouflaged into the animated surface, under which traces of geometric structure are drawn in charcoal.

The smallest work in the booth, *Doors II* (1982), is exceptionally rare as only a handful of Villa's works are of such scale. Canvas wraps around a 15-inch square board, disguising nearly imperceptible body prints in an abstract painting. Wrapped in collaged fabric is a chicken bone. Villa called these bone and fabric appliques "señoritas" due to their resemblance to women dancing.

Recently at Frieze New York 2023, Silverlens showcased a solo presentation of Carlos Villa chronicling the artist's work from 1960 to 2000—and his lasting influence on audiences. Running concurrently with Frieze London, *Remains of Surface*, a duo exhibition featuring the work of Carlos Villa and his life-long friend Leo Valledor (1936 – 1989), another trailblazing Filipino American modernist, is being exhibited at Silverlens New York through 4 November 2023.

<sup>1</sup>Mark Dean Johnson, *Carlos Villa: Illuminating Filipino American Futurism*. (Frieze New York: Silverlens, 2023).

<sup>2</sup>Patrick Flores, *Remains of Surface: Carlos Villa and Leo Valledor*. (Silverlens, 2023).



*Doors II, 1982*

acrylic and graphite on stretched canvas with chicken  
bone, synthetic hair, and fabric  
39.37h x 39.37w x 3.81d cm - 15.50h x 15.50w x 1.50d in

Price available upon request

CARLOS VILLA



Installation View of *Doors II*, 1982

CARLOS VILLA



Detail from *Doors II*, 1982



*What Comes Again, Comes Again, Etc., 1982*

acrylic on unstretched canvas with collaged canvas elements, chicken bones,  
synthetic hair, and fabric

241.30h x 307.34w cm • 95h x 121w in

Price available upon request



CARLOS VILLA



Detail from *What Comes Again, Comes Again, Etc.*, 1982

*Space Case*, 1980  
acrylic on unstretched canvas  
with collaged canvas elements  
228.60h x 220.98w cm - 90h x 87w in  
Price available upon request



CARLOS VILLA



Installation View of *Space Case*, 1980

CARLOS VILLA



Detail from *Space Case*, 1960

## CARLOS VILLA CV

b. 1936, d. 2013,  
San Francisco, USA



*Painted Cloak, 1970-71*

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Frieze London*, Silverlens, London  
*Frieze New York*, Silverlens, New York
- 2022 *Carlos Villa: Worlds in Collision*, Newark Museum of Art, Newark, NJ and Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, California  
*Carlos Villa: Roots and Reinvention*, San Francisco Arts Commission Main Gallery, War Memorial Veterans Building, San Francisco, California
- 2021 *Carlos Villa: Walks of Life, Friends Indeed (Chinatown)*, San Francisco, CA,  
*Carlos Villa*, Anglim Trimble, San Francisco, CA
- 2017 *CV Survey* at SFAI Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA,
- 2011 *Manongs, Some Doors and a Bouquet of Crates*, Mission Cultural Center, San Francisco, CA,
- 2007 *CV retrospective* at Hearst Art Gallery, St. Mary's College, Moraga, CA
- 1970 *CV solo exhibition* at the Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Remains of Surface*, Silverlens, New York  
*Shrines*, Silverlens, New York
- 2022 *East of the Pacific: Making Histories of Asian American Art*, Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University, Stanford, CA  
*Dead Lecturer / distant relative: Notes from the Woodshed, 1950-1980*, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, NY  
*Carlos Villa: On Paper*, Anglim Trimble, San Francisco, CA
- 2021 *Prospect.5: Yesterday we said tomorrow*, Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans
- 2019 *Singapore Biennale 2019, Every Step In the Right Direction*, Singapore Art Museum
- 2018 *Way Bay 2*, Berkeley Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley  
*Way Bay*, Berkeley Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley
- 2016 *Trees In The Forest*, Yale Union, Portland, OR
- 2011 *Under the Big Black Sun*, MOCA, Los Angeles
- 2010 *Rehistoricizing*, Luggage Store Gallery, San Francisco CA
- 2006 *Leo Valledor & Carlos Villa*, Mendenhall Sobieski Gallery, Pasadena, CA
- 2000 Thatcher Gallery, USF
- 1998 Treganza Museum, SFSU
- 1996 *The Present Hour*, Oakland Museum
- 1987 *The Ethnic Idea, curated by Andrée Maréchal-Workman*, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, California
- 1985 *Carlos Villa: 1961-1984, solo retrospective*, C.N. Gorman Museum and at the Memorial Union Art Gallery, University of California, Davis

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**b. 1936, d. 2013,  
San Francisco, USA**

- 1980 SFMoMA, San Francisco, CA  
ProArts, San Francisco, CA  
Euphrat Museum, De Anza College, Cupertino
- 1977 ***Look, Touch, Rub, Pull, Smell, and Hear***, Artspace, Sacramento, California
- 1973 University of Massachusetts
- 1972 ***The Whitney Annual***, Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC

### AWARDS

- 2012 Guggenheim Fellowship, Creative Arts, Fine Arts
- 2000 Pamana Award, Filipino American Art Exposition  
Guest Artist, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy
- 1998 Flintridge Foundation Grant
- 1997 Pollock-Krasner Foundation Award
- 1989 Distinguished Alumni Award, San Francisco Art Institute
- 1987 Guest Artist, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy
- 1973 Adaline Kent Award, San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI), San Francisco, California  
National Endowment for the Arts Grant
- 1959 Honorable Mention, Richmond Art Center, Richmond, California

### EDUCATION

- 1963 Master of Fine Arts in Painting, Mills College; studied under Richard Diebenkorn, Elmer Bischoff, Frank Lobdell, and Ralph DuCasse
- 1961 Bachelor of Fine Arts, California School of Fine Arts (San Francisco Art Institute)

### TEACHING

Painting Department at the San Francisco Art Institute  
California State University, Sacramento

### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Curiel, Jonathan. "Filipino American artist's work makes history in San Francisco exhibits" San Francisco Examiner (June 17, 2022) [https://www.sfexaminer.com/our\\_sections/fanfare/filipino-american-artists-work-makes-history-in-san-francisco-exhibits/article\\_d35fa13c-edbd-11ec-8e14-63f8ad81b83f.html](https://www.sfexaminer.com/our_sections/fanfare/filipino-american-artists-work-makes-history-in-san-francisco-exhibits/article_d35fa13c-edbd-11ec-8e14-63f8ad81b83f.html)
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**b. 1936, d. 2013,  
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Frank, Peter "A Lot of Local Abstraction" L.A. Weekly, Sept 27, 2006. <https://www.laweekly.com/a-lot-of-local-abstraction/>



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Portrait of Carlos Villa, 1985