



M Muhlenberg
College

Art Exhibition: Ronny Quevedo
Space of Play, Play of Space
September 18 – November 2, 2019
Martin Art Gallery
Muhlenberg College
Baker Center for the Arts
2400 Chew Street
Allentown, PA 18104



Errant Globe, 2015 Soccer ball bladder, globe stand 14"

We are pleased to host **Ronny Quevedo** for his multi-site solo exhibition, ***Space of Play, Play of Space***, in the Martin Art Gallery and in a field drawing adjacent to Trexler Library on campus. We will hold an opening reception on September 18, from 5:30 – 7:00pm. Additionally, Quevedo will give an artist talk on October 15th at 7:00pm, in the Recital Hall, adjacent to the Gallery as the second Center for Ethics talk, exploring the theme of the Borders, Nationalisms, Identities. Quevedo's Gallery exhibition will be complemented by a field-sized drawing measuring 175 x 125 feet. Being over twenty thousand square feet means this dynamic work is viewable in the round from nearby sidewalks and streets. Visitors are encouraged to directly engage with the work by walking on - and through the field, which is centrally located on Muhlenberg College Campus. This new drawing will be renewed over the course of the exhibition, continuing through November 2.

This multi-site exhibition locates the viewer as competitor in an imaginary, negotiated space of play. A metaphor for shifting global landscapes, Quevedo interrogates notions of borders and boundaries to explore our relationship to nationalisms, territory, and migration. *Space of Play, Play of Space* is an investigation of the self through the games we play by magnifying the role of migration within that transformation.

The parallels between play and migration generate from New York City indoor and outdoor soccer leagues. Played on weekends at public schools and parks, leagues are coordinated and operated by migrant Latin American and Caribbean communities. Quevedo's personal experience intersects with this cultural site as the artist attended weekly games with his father, a player and referee.

The movement and action within sports is a metaphor for an insistence on survival and constant adaptation. This use of play is a subversive transformation to the rules and capabilities placed upon

people when the conditions of a society become oppressive. By incorporating these games Quevedo invokes an architectural and narrative space – where boundaries are malleable, limits are negotiable and competition is a generative force for evolving identities.

The questioning of inheritance and memory are active in Quevedo's work. The act of passing – passing down, passing on, passing the ball – offers generative contemplations on our points of origin. Not knowing a new land and the uncertainty of being able to return to a home land, the notion of instability and crossing over also highlights the daily ritual of uncertainty showcased by the drawings in this exhibition. Through this framework, the movement of bodies and identities informs a new playing field.

The role of appropriation also provides a double-meaning to the cultural specificity at play in the exhibition. Milk crates are icons of an urban landscape and are inverted to suggest an ancient past. The use of contact paper connotes a disposable material and socio-economic placing as it also functions as and architectural sites.

This dialectic of nomadism and cultural production is complemented by the concept of Relation, theorized by Edouard Glissant. Glissant emphasizes that peripheries influence central forms of culture—that the margins offer a new understanding of 'center'. It is more creative in determining meaning than a static position based on essentialism. Quevedo highlights this concept (being having been born in Ecuador and raised in The Bronx) to showcase the influence of diasporas on central modes of operating their arenas.

As games ask us to agree upon the rules and bounds of competition *Space of Play, Play of Space* explores the possibilities beyond the continuing notion of traditions and legacy.

Ronny Quevedo (b.1981, Guayaquil, Ecuador) works in a variety of mediums including sculpture and drawing. Quevedo's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at The Whitney Museum of American Art; Perez Art Museum Miami; Elizabeth Dee Gallery; The Drawing Center; the Queens Museum; The Bronx Museum of the Arts; and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, amongst others. He is a recipient of the 2017 Blade of Grass Fellowship for Socially Engaged Art and the 2016 Queens Museum/Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists. He has participated in residencies at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Kala Art Institute, the Core Program at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Project Row Houses, Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, and Lower East Side Printshop. He has been published in *Hyperallergic* and *Art Forum*. Quevedo received his MFA from the Yale School of Art in 2013 and BFA from The Cooper Union in 2003.

Martin Art Gallery is located in our Philip Johnson-designed Baker Center for the Arts on Muhlenberg College Campus, at 2400 Chew Street, in Allentown PA 18104. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday 12 - 8pm. All MAG programming is Unticketed, Free, and Open to the Public. For images or info, contact the Gallery Director: Paul M. Nicholson at paulnicholson@muhlenberg.edu