

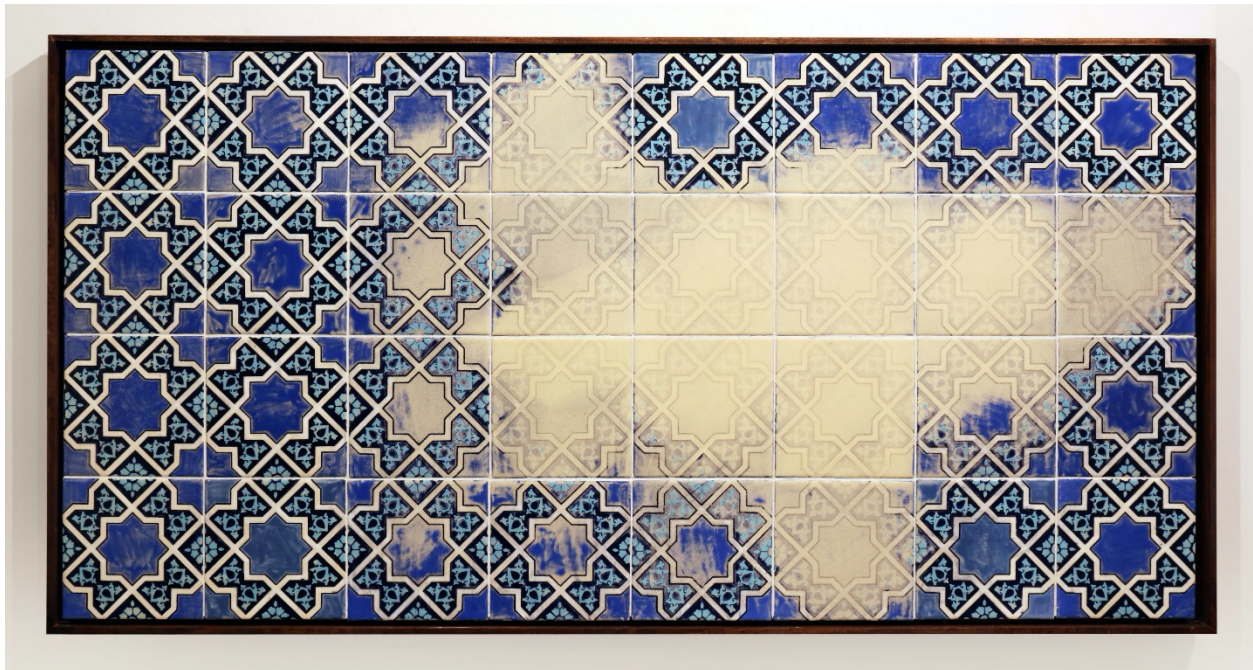


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 15, 2022

CONTACT  
Emma Jacobson-Sive  
emma@ejs-media.com  
Suzanne Isken  
suzanne@craftcontemporary.org  
323 937 4230 x 27

## **Many**

May 29 – September 11, 2022



**Los Angeles** – Craft Contemporary presents *Many* featuring twelve Los Angeles-based artists who utilize multiples in their artistic practices. Their works range from traditional, historic techniques such as printmaking and artist books to the practice of specific mark making, repetition of images, or objects to transform their own visual vocabulary into artwork. Several artists accumulate objects or images in reference to capitalist systems of mass production and waste. Together their works exemplify the unique power of multiples to record and disseminate information, amplify narratives, investigate various modes of labor, and return production to the hand of the artist.

Exhibition artists include Zeina Baltagi, Tia Blassingame, Sula Bermúdez-Silverman, John Birtle, Joel Freeman, Pamela Smith Hudson, Saj Issa, Gelare Khoshgozaran, Álvaro D. Márquez, Narsiso Martinez, Stephanie Mercado, and Aryana Minai. While the artworks incorporated in *Many* range in materials, methods, and their underlying meanings, all the exhibiting artists use their work to make visible the people and labor that capitalist systems try to hide.



To create her piece, *Ablution of Faith and Frustration*, Saj Issa meticulously hand-painted thirty-two ceramic tiles and then subsequently scrubbed off much of her delicate glaze work. The work refers to the Islamic practice of physically cleansing oneself as a metaphor for cleansing one's sins. Issa demonstrates the frustrations and endurance that one builds when engaging in labor or prayer and worship. All these acts require repetition and perseverance, and she considers how the concept of frustration is present in all.

Artist Narsiso Martinez addresses the human and environmental costs of the agricultural industry, in which he worked as a laborer for many years. His sensitive drawings of farm workers on produce boxes “contrast the disparities of lifestyles between workers and owners through the usage of symbols, some found on the used boxes and others produced through the art-making process.” In his new series of portraits, *Sin Bandana*, Martinez depicts the workers without masks, glasses, or other protective equipment for the first time. The absence of masks represents the workers coming out from the shadows, regardless of their circumstances or immigration status, and being fully seen.

Gelare Khoshgozaran refers to herself as an “undisciplined” artist whose work engages with the legacies of imperial violence and militarization in daily life. Born in Tehran, Iran, Khoshgozaran's work in *Many* utilizes arrangements of toy planes cast in aluminum and 3-D printed in steel and copper to create *Boneyard*, a reference to the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, which is the sole aircraft boneyard for all excess U.S. military and government aircraft. This work encapsulates Khoshgozaran's preoccupation with the violence and waste of war and of U.S. sanctions which prevent Iran from purchasing metals – such as aluminum, steel, and copper – or the necessary parts for plane repairs, thus making air travel within the country incredibly dangerous.

Lastly, Zeina Baltagi, a first-generation Lebanese-American artist and educator, amasses thousands of pennies to symbolize the labor of her own body, immigrants, and women – often in pursuit of the American Dream. The artist punches holes and assembles the pennies to create heavy chain mail-like sculptures which she has worn in performance works that embody the heavy weight of economic mobility. Debuting at Craft Contemporary will be Baltagi's *Token Bitch*, 2022, a pressed penny machine. For one dollar, visitors will be able to insert a penny and use their own labor to crank the machine handle – smashing an image of the artist, sporting a keffiyeh scarf and cowboy hat, into the face of the U.S. penny.

In conjunction with *Many*, the museum organized a print exchange portfolio called *Many More*, which celebrates the numerous ways prints can be made and shared. The portfolio was generated from an open call to printmakers and print lovers throughout the United States. Each participant sent in one or two print editions and, in exchange, will receive a portfolio of prints by other participants. The full portfolio of approximately 70 prints will be on display at the museum, highlighting how sharing and creating community are inherent in printmaking.



## CREDITS:

*Many* and *Many More* were organized by Holly Jerger, Senior Exhibitions Curator. *Many* is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and the City of Los Angeles, Department of Cultural Affairs.



## Image Credits:

(first page)

Saj Issa, *Ablution of Faith and Frustration*, 2020. Ceramic on wood, 25 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber.

(above)

Narsiso Martinez, *Sin Bandana*, 2022. Ink, charcoal, and "gold leaf" on produce box, 20 x 12 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Charlie James Gallery.

Gelare Khoshgozaran, *Boneyard*, 2020. Aluminum, copper and steel filament, dimensions variable. Installation view, *LIKELY MINE* (2020), Visitor Welcome Center, Los Angeles. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Josh Schaedel.

## RELATED PROGRAMS:

For a full list of exhibition programs, visit <https://www.craftcontemporary.org/programs/>

### Exhibition Opening Reception

Sat, May 28 | 6–9 pm | in-person | \$12 | members free  
Join us to celebrate the opening of our new exhibitions *Many* and *The Sum of the Parts: Dimensions in Quilting*. Also on view will be the special project *Many More*, a community print exchange portfolio.

### Maker Night: Bookmaking with Debra Disman

Thu, Jul 7 | 6–8 pm | in-person, outdoors  
\$12 | members free | materials and drinks included  
Book artist Debra Disman will teach basic bookmaking techniques to create a side-bound handsewn book! Materials will be available to customize the front and back covers of your book!

### Exhibition Walk-through: *Many* with Senior Exhibitions Curator Holly Jerger

Sun, Jul 17 | 11 am–12:30 pm | in-person, indoors | free  
Join Senior Exhibitions Curator Holly Jerger and exhibition artists for a special walkthrough of our current exhibition.

### Craft Lab Family Workshop: Stamp and Repeat with John Birtle

Sunday, August 14 | 1:30 – 3:30 PM | in-person, museum courtyard  
\$10 Adults | \$7 Children | Free for Members  
Join exhibition artist John Birtle to create amazing, rubber-stamped artworks! Experiment with repeated imagery, layering, scale, and perspective to create dynamic compositions by stamping ink on paper.

### Many Prints: A Relief Printmaking Workshop with Álvaro D. Márquez

Saturday, September 10 | 12:00 – 4:00 PM | in-person, indoors  
\$65 / \$60 members | includes materials  
Meet *Many* artist Álvaro D. Márquez as he guides a day-long workshop on relief printing. Participants will learn how to hand carve their own printing blocks, rolling and inking, and experiment with printing techniques!



---

Located on Los Angeles' historic Miracle Mile since 1965, Craft Contemporary reveals the potential of craft to educate, captivate, provoke, and empower. With a focus on contemporary art made from craft media and processes, Craft Contemporary presents dynamic exhibitions by established and emerging artists and designers who are often underrepresented in larger art institutions. Through a robust roster of regular programs and events, Craft Contemporary offers creative opportunities for the public to participate in hands-on workshops led by professional artists. Craft Contemporary cultivates an environment for people in Los Angeles to deepen their relationship to art, creativity, and one another. For more information, visit [www.craftcontemporary.org](http://www.craftcontemporary.org).

**LOCATION:** 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

**ADMISSION:** FREE every Sunday

**REGULARLY:** \$9 for adults; \$7 for students, teachers, seniors; free for Craft Contemporary members

**HOURS:** Wednesday - Sunday, 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM