



G R O U N D S F O R S C U L P T U R E

Exploring the Power of Ceramics, Grounds For Sculpture Presents Two Exhibitions Highlighting Artists of Color in Spring 2022

A Solo Exhibition of Ceramicist and Social Activist Roberto Lugo will be Paired with a Group Exhibition in Partnership with The Color Network

Hamilton, NJ – November 4, 2021; updated March 21, 2022 – **Grounds For Sculpture** announces two exhibitions on contemporary ceramics opening in May 2022. Debuting new work, a solo exhibition of American artist and social activist **Roberto Lugo** will display his signature combination of traditional and contemporary iconography and techniques. In partnership with **The Color Network**, Grounds For Sculpture will simultaneously present ***Fragile: Earth***, a group exhibition of sixteen artists of color who meditate on social, environmental, and individual perceptions of fragility through the medium of clay. Together these exhibitions support Grounds For Sculpture's institutional strategy, which uses key components of curatorial work, collections, and exhibitions as a catalyst for transformation across the organization, addressing issues of inclusivity, access, and equity.

"Grounds For Sculpture has always been a platform for contemporary practitioners of sculpture, and this spring, we will take a focused look at the underrepresented medium of ceramics and shine a spotlight on artists of color working in this field," said Gary Schneider, Executive Director of Grounds For Sculpture. "These exhibitions reflect our commitment to present works by contemporary sculptors, understanding that sharing contemporary art reflects the greater world, challenges perceptions, and inspires new possibilities."

ROBERTO LUGO: THE VILLAGE POTTER

May 22, 2022 – January 8, 2023

Master ceramicist Roberto Lugo creates multicultural mash-ups, reimagining traditional European and Asian porcelain forms and techniques with a 21st-century street sensibility. Lugo often captures portraits of leading figures in contemporary culture, from Sojourner Truth to The Notorious BIG, in this luxurious medium. The artist will be in residence at Grounds For Sculpture throughout the winter of 2022, creating a new series of works for the exhibition *Robert Lugo: The Village Potter*. In partnership with The Seward Johnson Atelier and the Digital Atelier, Lugo will create a monumental work that will provide opportunities for visitors to physically interact within the form—representing a first for the artist to see his visual language presented at that scale. In addition, Lugo will create a series of works which will be fired on site.

"There's a distinct separation of classes that happened in the history of ceramics—at one point porcelain was considered more than expensive than gold," said **Roberto Lugo**. "In my exhibition at Grounds For Sculpture, I want to communicate to people that ceramics are for everyone and that no medium should be reserved for any single group of people."

Roberto Lugo: The Village Potter is co-curated by Faith McClellan, Grounds For Sculpture Director of Exhibitions and Collections, and Gary Garrido Schneider, Executive Director. An additional exhibition

within the gallery, curated by Lugo, will explore the theme of mentorship in the development of his practice, by including works by both artists who have influenced his work and those he has mentored, such as Malcolm Mobutu Smith, Alfredo Carlson, and Tina Flood. The gallery will also feature a drop-in creative space offering visitors of any skill level an opportunity to work with clay.

Roberto Lugo: *The Village Potter* is supported in part by New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel & Tourism, and the Edna W. Andrade Fund of the Philadelphia Foundation.

FRAGILE: EARTH

May 22, 2022 – January 8, 2023

In partnership with The Color Network, *Fragile: Earth* features sixteen artists of color working in clay and using the medium to uncover deeper truths of society. When unfired, clay is soft, flexible, and forgiving; when fired, it is solid and strong but can easily shatter. This exhibition explores vulnerability as strength, the faults of a strong façade, and the fragility of entities often taken for granted, such as nature and government, amid ongoing global health and social crises.

Guest curated by Assistant Curator for the Museum of Arts and Design Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy, the exhibition will feature ceramic works by Natalia Arbelaez, Ashwini Bhat, Ebitenyefa Baralaye, Syd Carpenter, Adam Chau, Jennifer Ling Datchuk, Magdolene Dykstra, April Felipe, Raheleh Filsoofi, Salvador Jiménez Flores, Anabel Juárez, Anina Major, Jane Margarete, Mariana Ramos Ortiz, Virgil Ortiz, and Sarah Petty. Artists were selected from within The Color Network as well as an open call to ensure the broad artistic community is represented.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of artist-led programs, including intersections with trauma-informed art sessions, ESL/Spanish workshops, urban gardening, professional development for artists, and a fundraising event to support the mission of The Color Network.

About Roberto Lugo

Roberto Lugo is an American artist, ceramicist, social activist, spoken word poet, and educator. Born in Kensington, Philadelphia to Puerto Rican parents, Lugo began his career as a graffiti artist before discovering ceramics. In his current practice, he uses porcelain and illuminates its aristocratic surface with imagery of poverty, inequality, and social and racial injustice. Their hand-painted surfaces feature classic decorative patterns and motifs combined with elements of modern urban graffiti and portraits of individuals whose faces are historically absent on this type of luxury item – people like Sojourner Truth, Dr. Cornel West, and The Notorious BIG, as well as Lugo's family members and, very often, himself. Lugo holds a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA from Penn State. His work has been featured in exhibitions at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, and the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, among others. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including a 2019 Pew Fellowship, a Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon Polsky Rome Prize, and a US Artist Award. His work is found in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The High Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts

Boston, Brooklyn Museum, Walters Art Museum, and more. He is currently an Assistant Professor at Tyler School of Art and Architecture in Philadelphia, PA.

About The Color Network

The Color Network's mission is to aid in the advancement of people of color in the ceramic arts. Their focus includes exhibitions, an online database, community events, and mentorship. Since 2018, The Color Network has created an international Mentorship program, curated exhibitions, held a residency at Watershed Ceramics, and provided opportunities through micro grants and an artists' listserv. Its active Instagram page (@thecolornetwork) highlights both established and rising stars in the ceramics field, as well as resources for the community. The Color Network also holds panels, resource tables, community events, and exhibitions during the National Council for Education on the Ceramic Arts conference, as well as periodic affinity rooms and safe rooms for specific communities.

About Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy

Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy (she/her) is a New York and Los Angeles-based curator, writer, and arts administrator of contemporary art and craft. Her current research focuses on the subversive power of humor, cuteness, and leisure as tools of protest. Amplifying the voices of BIPOC artists is central to her practice. She serves as Assistant Curator at the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD), NY. She has helped the curatorial team organize over twenty exhibitions since 2016, including 2021's *Craft Front & Center*. She also oversees MAD's Burke Prize, a prestigious contemporary craft award. Recent projects include exhibitions *Sleight of Hand* (2020) at the Center for Craft, NC, where she was a 2020 curatorial fellow, and *Clay Is Just Thick Paint* (2020) at Greenwich House Pottery, NY. She has also contributed to *Cultured* and *American Craft* magazines and catalogs at MAD and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, NE. She holds an MA from the Bard Graduate Center, NY, in Decorative Arts, Design History, & Material Culture.

About Grounds For Sculpture

Grounds For Sculpture is a 42-acre not-for-profit sculpture park, arboretum, and museum, founded by the late artist and philanthropist Seward Johnson. Featuring nearly 300 contemporary sculptures by renowned and emerging artists in a beckoning landscape, Grounds For Sculpture combines art and nature to surprise, inspire, and engage all visitors in the artist's act of invention. In addition to its permanent collection, Grounds For Sculpture offers rotating special exhibitions in its six indoor galleries, rich educational programs, and dynamic family events. Located in Hamilton, New Jersey, Grounds For Sculpture is easily accessible from both the New York City and Philadelphia metropolitan areas and is now open year-round. For more information, visit groundsforsculpture.org.

Media Contacts

Christina Ludgood / Catherine Coughlin
Resnicow and Associates
Account Executive / Senior Account Supervisor
212-671-5178 / 212-671-5162

cludgood@resnicow.com / ccoughlin@resnicow.com

George Chevalier
Grounds For Sculpture
Manager of Marketing
609-249-0210

gchevalier@groundsforsculpture.org