

**Lizania Cruz: *Gathering Evidence: Santo Domingo & New York City***

Curator-Mentor: Guadalupe Maravilla  
July 16 – August 25, 2021

**Opening Reception**

Saturday, July 24, 4-6pm ET

***Hasta la Raíz [Down to the Root]* Screening + Conversation with Lizania Cruz and Elena Lorac**

Friday, August 13, 6-8pm ET

**Happening of the *Investigation of the Dominican Racial Imaginary***

Saturday, August 14, 2-5pm ET



Lizania Cruz, *¡Se Buscan Testigos! [Looking for Witnesses!]* Portrait of a Detective in NYC, 2021. Documentation of happening, dimensions variable. Photo by Neha Gautam.

CUE Art Foundation is pleased to present

*Gathering Evidence: Santo Domingo & New York City*, a solo exhibition by Lizania Cruz, curated and mentored by Guadalupe Maravilla. The exhibition is the second chapter in Cruz's ongoing project *Investigation of the Dominican Racial Imaginary*, a body of work in which the artist collects and examines public testimonies alongside individual and national archives in order to understand how Dominicans internalize state-sanctioned historical narratives that result in the repression and erasure of African heritage within the Dominican Republic. Throughout the exhibition, Cruz employs personal and national archives and oral histories as a means to question how the creation and acceptance of the nation-state as an institution formulating identity and belonging reinforces systems of white supremacy within the Dominican racial imaginary.

Central to the exhibition is *¡Se Buscan Testigos! [Looking for Witnesses!]*, a multi-part participatory project which amasses answers to questions posed by the artist to the public in Santo Domingo and New York City on themes related to the Dominican racial imaginary, including the role of the diaspora within this construct. Cruz sought participants on the streets in both locations through the distribution of hand-painted posters and printed flyers, newspaper advertisements, and broadcasts via speakers mounted on pickup trucks, prompting residents to respond with evidence via WhatsApp. These participatory actions are documented through photographs, testimonial videos, and signs pasted across the gallery walls. Visitors can read all of the testimonies collected thus far via an app on their phone, and can also apply to participate as a Civilian Reviewer of the collected evidence. Through a call-and-response dialogue with the public, Cruz questions how nationalism, citizenship, and borders are constructed and maintained while simultaneously interrogating the accuracy of history and the authority of the archive.

In the middle of the room is the installation *The Plaintiffs Records*, produced in collaboration with the organizations Reconoci.do and We Are All Dominican, which includes 20 books composed of 10,000 pages each. Every page represents a birth certificate that was revoked by the Dominican government as a result of La Sentencia, a 2013 law that stripped citizenship from 200,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent. Each book also contains a bookmark with a QR code that allows visitors to read a story told by a person who was affected by La Sentencia.

Across her practice, Cruz utilizes such participatory actions to make the public an integral part of the archives she is examining, nodding to a non-linear understanding of the construction of history as an ongoing project of constant additions and revisions. In her exhibition catalogue essay, Alex Santana writes: "This participation dissolves the inherent authority of hegemonic ideologies and re-vindicates the public in the archive, while building authentic historical memory. Cruz is simultaneously contesting existing archives, and perhaps more importantly, creating entirely new experiential ones where the main purpose is re-engaging and re-contextualizing the public through direct inclusion."



Lizania Cruz, *¿Se Buscan Testigos!* [Looking for Witnesses!], 2020. Rice sack and acrylic paint, 46 x 40 inches. Photo by Paula Cury.

**Lizania Cruz** is a Dominican participatory artist and designer interested in how migration affects ways of being and belonging. Through research, oral history, and audience participation, she creates projects that highlight a pluralistic narrative on migration. Cruz has been an artist-in-residence and fellow at the Laundromat Project Create Change (2017-2019), Agora Collective Berlin (2018), Design Trust for Public Space (2018), Recess Session (2019), IdeasCity:New Museum (2019), Stoneleaf Retreat (2019), Robert Blackburn Workshop Studio Immersion Project (2019), A.I.R. Gallery (2020-2021), BRIClab: Contemporary Art (2020-2021), Center for Book Arts (2020-2021), and Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, Visual Arts (2021-2022). Her work has been exhibited at the Arlington Arts Center, BronxArtSpace, Project for Empty Space, ArtCenter South Florida, Jenkins Johnson Project Space, The August Wilson Center, Sharjah's First Design Biennale, Untitled, and Art Miami, among others. Most recently, she is included in *ESTAMOS BIEN: LA TRIENAL 20/21* at el Museo del Barrio, the first national survey of Latinx artists by the institution. Furthermore, her artworks and installations have been featured in *Hyperallergic*, *Fuse News*, *KQED arts*, *Dazed Magazine*, *Garage Magazine*, and *The New York Times*.

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**Guadalupe Maravilla** is a transdisciplinary visual artist, choreographer, and healer. At the age of eight, Maravilla was part of the first wave of unaccompanied, undocumented children to arrive at the United States border in the 1980s as a result of the Salvadoran Civil War. As an acknowledgement of his own migratory past, Maravilla grounds his practice in the historical and contemporary contexts of immigrant culture, particularly those belonging to Latinx communities. Maravilla currently lives in Brooklyn, NY. In 2019, Maravilla was awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. He has exhibited and performed in major museums such as Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, and many more. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a 32-page color catalogue, with texts by Lizania Cruz, Guadalupe Maravilla, and Alex Santana. The catalogue will be available online and free of charge to gallery visitors. For more information please contact Programs Director Lilly Hern-Fondation at [lilly@cueartfoundation.org](mailto:lilly@cueartfoundation.org).

This exhibition is a winning selection from the 2020-21 Open Call for Solo Exhibitions. The proposal was unanimously selected by a panel comprised of artist Guadalupe Maravilla, curator Sohrab Mohebbi, artist Ronny Quevedo, and curator Legacy Russell. In line with CUE's commitment to providing substantive professional development opportunities, panelists also serve as mentors to the exhibiting artists, providing support throughout the process of developing the exhibition. We are honored to work with **Guadalupe Maravilla** as the mentor to Lizania Cruz.

**CUE Art Foundation** is a visual arts center dedicated to creating essential career and educational opportunities for artists of all ages. Through exhibitions, arts education, and public programs, CUE provides artists, writers, and audiences with sustaining, meaningful experiences and resources.

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