



## Cuban-Born Artist Ricardo Brey is Now Represented by Alexander Gray Associates, First Solo Show in New York Slated for 2019

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*Born in Havana, Cuba, Ricardo Brey lives and works in Ghent, Belgium. | Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates*

MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST **Ricardo Brey** has joined Alexander Gray Associates in New York. Brey's research-oriented practice explores the roots of who we are—the origins of humanity, the intersection of nature and culture, and how we understand our place in the world. He expresses his findings through drawings, sculpture, and installations. Born in Havana, Brey has been living in Ghent, Belgium for nearly 30 years.

A child during the Cuban Revolution, Brey received the best art school education available. After graduating from Escuela Nacional de Arte, he became ensconced in Havana's art scene. A few years later, the artist secured a spot in Volumen I (1981), a pivotal group show at the Centro de Arte Internacional in Havana. The attention Brey received opened up opportunities

to leave Cuba and exhibit his work internationally. In 1992, he participated in Documenta IX—the first Cuba artist to do so. His work has also been presented at the Venice Biennial (1999, 2015) and Sao Paulo Biennial (1996).

When Brey exhibits his work, he transforms the spaces, creating engaging experiences for viewers. Alexander Gray described how he approaches his displays:

Brey's installation for Documenta consisted of a series of objects, including old Venetian blinds, mattresses, panes of glass, and an electric fan, and represented a new stage in his artistic development. Moving away from the handmade Afro-Cuban objects that typified his late 1980s work, Brey began to create his own hybrid transcultural myths through the juxtaposition of disparate readymades.

During the 1990s, Ricardo Brey continued to refine this approach to sculpture and installation, harnessing the associative potential of objects to suggest a narrative. For example, Brey used tires to construct installations that serve as meditations on transience and exile—the tires' forms referencing the tire rafts built by Cuban refugees to cross the Florida Strait.

Since 2000, Brey has experimented with vitrine installations, producing works like Universe (2002–2006), consisting of 1,004 drawings illustrating an “entire” universe—including every bird, fish, insect, and plant—its supplement Annex (2003–2016), and the ongoing series Every life is a fire, intricate boxes that unfold to reveal books, drawings, sculptures, and performative proposals.

“These recent works (since 2000), like Brey’s earlier fantastical historical documents, reveal the artist’s decades-long inquiry into how humans understand and categorize reality and themselves.”  
— Alexander Gray Associates

Brey has said, “What fascinates me is the origin of the human race, our culture and our society. It is from the relationship between different life forms and between the communities of earlier and today that we can deduce the state of the present world. We can learn from our evolutionary past and thus consider our current condition critically. From a global approach man can emphasize the underlying connection between everything around us.”

In announcing its representation of Brey, Alexander Gray noted that although the artist has exhibited extensively throughout Europe and participated in many international biennials, he is less known in the Americas where the gallery intends to broaden his exposure and raise his U.S. profile. Brey’s inaugural exhibition with Alexander Gray is scheduled for 2019. The presentation will be his first-ever solo show in New York. **CT**

## **BOOKSHELF**

The publication of “Ricardo Brey” coincided with two gallery exhibitions presented in Italy (1996-1997). The text is in Italian. A more recent volume, “Brey” documents in Spanish the artist’s 2014 solo exhibition at the National Museum of Fine Arts, Havana.



*RICARDO BREY, "Silver," 2011 (aged silver metallic paper, paper, lead, necklaces, chain, bell, trinkets, one leporello book), Dimensions variable. | Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York. © 2018 Ricardo Brey*



RICARDO BREY, Installation view of "Reposition Papeles de Verrazano" (1985) on surrounded wall, with "The structure of myths" (1985–2015) at center of gallery, Ricardo Brey: Fuel to the Fire, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (M HKA) (2015). | Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York. © 2018 Ricardo Brey



RICARDO BREY, "Inferno," 2016 (graphite, pencil, letters, mirror, metal, ceramic and raffia on cardboard Velin d'Arches, blanc, 400g, 47.25 x 63 inches. | Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York. © 2018 Ricardo Brey



*RICARDO BREY, "Dust bathing," 2017 (1250 birds molded in clay), Installation view, Kathmandu Triennale, Patan Museum (2017). | Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York. © 2018 Ricardo Brey*

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