

JUNE 10, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LEE QUIÑONES – *BLACK AND BLUE*

JUNE 12th THRU JULY 24th, 2021

ARTIST'S RECEPTION JUNE 19th FROM 6-9PM AT THE GALLERY

Media Contact: Rachel Cohen

rachel@cjamesgallery.com

213.687.0844

Charlie James Gallery is very proud to present *Black and Blue*, our second solo show with New York-based artist Lee Quiñones.

The exhibition takes its name from the show's centerpiece painting that focuses on our collective witness to the horrific murder of George Floyd on May 25th, 2020, and in a subliminal way, reminds us of the continual silencing of black and brown voices across generation and geography, figures such as Stephen Biko in room 619 and the countless souls abducted in America's original sin of 1619.

The *Black and Blue* piece makes clear reference to mobile phone technology and to the gravitational pull of social media that we all use in some shape or form every day of our lives. Aside from its semi hidden central figures, *Black and Blue* contains an array of 569 individually painted I-phone screens, one for each second of the 9 minute 29 second video that marked the murder of Floyd. The painting sets the tone for the rest of the show which features paintings and drawings dealing with historical social justice fault lines, from the desegregation of Little Rock Central High in Little Rock, AR to the ongoing displacement of Native Americans. These new works are conceived around plays on common phrases such as "Loss for words" becoming "Lost for words" and derogatory statements such as "Get Off My Lawn!" countered with "Get Off My Dawn!"

Supporting the political nucleus of the show, Lee will present a suite of "bombed" canvas paintings – expressive pieces acknowledging Lee's graffiti roots executed in a paint booth fashioned within Lee's studio. The show also contains a large-scale collaborative work between Lee Quiñones and NY artist William Cordova titled *Physical Graffiti*, referencing the cover image of the iconic Led Zeppelin album from 1975. The vintage and contemporary drawings selected by Quiñones for *Black and Blue* amplify the themes of struggle, justice, and resilience in the show.

Lee Quiñones was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico in 1960, and raised in New York City's Lower East Side. One of the originators of street art, Lee started painting on New York City's streets and subway cars in the 1970s. Over the next decade, he would paint over 100 whole subway cars throughout the MTA

system, then shift to a studio-based practice. Lee was instrumental in moving street art above the ground when he created the first handball court mural in 1978. He has had numerous solo shows and exhibited internationally, first at Galleria Medusa in Rome, Italy in 1979. In 1980, Lee had his first New York show at White Columns, ushering in an important era as spray paint made the transition from moving objects to stationary canvas works. His work was included in the critical “Times Square Show” (1980); “Graffiti Art Success for America at Fashion Moda” (1980); the “New York/New Wave” show (1981) at PS1; and, in “Documenta #7” in Kassel, Germany (1983). In the past decade, his drawings and paintings have been shown in “East Village USA” at the New Museum of Contemporary Art (2005), “The ‘S’ Files” at El Museo del Barrio (2010), and “Looking at Music 3.0” at the Museum of Modern Art (2011). He has had solo shows at MoMA PS1, Contemporary Art Center of Cincinnati, the Fun Gallery, Barbara Gladstone, Galerie Rudolf Zwirner, Lisson Gallery, Barbara Farber, and Nicole Klagsbrun, among others. In 1983 he starred in Charlie Ahearn’s influential film, “Wild Style,” which served as a blueprint for the emerging hip hop and street art movements. Lee also appears in Blondie’s “Rapture” video, and in the film “Downtown 81.” His work also appears in the Tony Silver and Henry Chalfant 1983 documentary film “Style Wars” and Manfred Kirchheimer’s “Stations of the Elevated.”

Quiñones’ paintings are in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of the City of New York, the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin, The Perez Art Museum Miami, the Groninger Museum (Groningen, Netherlands), and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam, Netherlands).

Lee Quiñones lives and works in Brooklyn, New York and is represented by Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles.

Artist Website: www.leequinones.com

Artist Instagram: @leequinones

Gallery website: www.cjamesgallery.com

Gallery Instagram: @charliejamesgallery