



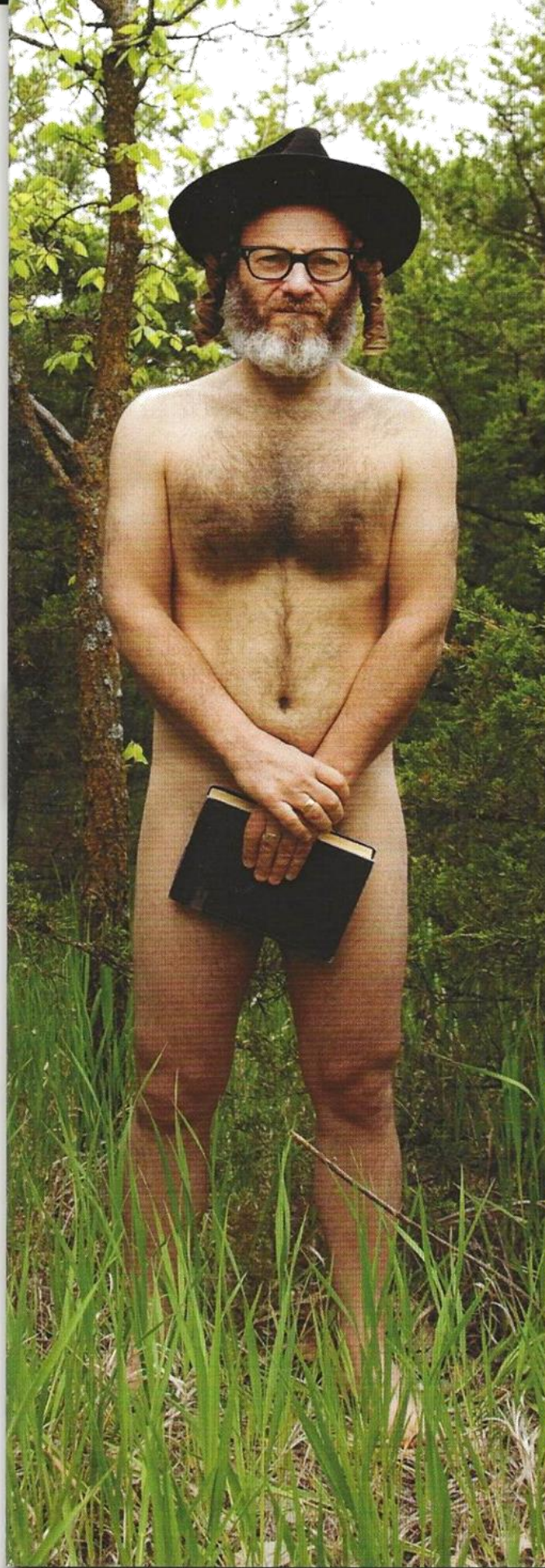
# DOUBLE PORTRAIT

Charley Friedman and Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez



PAUL W. ZUCCAIRE GALLERY  
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY  
JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 17, 2018





CHARLEY FRIEDMAN

The glue that binds my work together is humor. The crux of my art is to explore the absurd, tragic and contradictory nature of living that humor can uniquely portray from multiple yet equal tangents. Because humor has no material preference, I move between sculpture, performance, photography and video.

# DOUBLE

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NANCY FRIEDEMANN-SÁNCHEZ

My work is a visual novel—a multifaceted project comprised of paintings, sculptures, objects and mixed media that together and in different voices weave a synchronicity of dialogues, passages, punctuations and silences about hybridity and cultural ownership. In it, I use a vocabulary of women's work, Spanish colonial illustrations, pre-Columbian and contemporary indigenous imagery and textiles to tell a complex story about migration, cultural hybridity and the representation of collective memory.

# PORTRAIT





# CHARLEY FRIEDMAN

Charley Friedman received his Masters of Fine Arts from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University and received his Bachelors of Fine Arts from Macalester College, St. Paul, MN. He attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

Selected solo exhibitions include: Arts & Culture Center/Hollywood, FL, Museum of Nebraska Art, Omi International Art Center, Nina Johnson Gallery, Neues Kunstforum, Sheldon Museum of Art, Volta, Barbara Matthew Gallery, Kantor/Feuer Gallery, Queens Museum and Galleriá Cero in Bogotá, Colombia.

Selected performances and group shows include: PS1/MOMA, AiOP/Sense: NYC, Sheldon Museum of Art, Joslyn Museum of Art, Freight + Volume, Fabric Workshop, Gallery Diet, Jack Tilton Gallery, Black and White Gallery, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, The New Museum and an upcoming performance at Mid-American Art Alliance in Kansas City.

Awards include: Nebraska Arts Council/Artist Merit Award, PV Arts, Smack Mellon "Hot Picks Artist", Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant Recipient, two-time Rema Hort Nominee. Residencies include: MacDowell Colony, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Fountainhead Residency, Taller Arte Dos Gráfico, Cooper Union/AIR Summer Studio, Eastern Frontier Society and PV Arts.

Friedman's work is in the permanent collections of: Walker Art Center, OMI International Art Center, Goldman Corporate Collection, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Stanford University, New York Public Library, Amherst College, Sheldon Museum of Art, Macalester College.

[charleyfriedman.com](http://charleyfriedman.com)



*Garden*



*The New Deal*



*Science Project*



# CONVERSATION WITH CHARLEY FRIEDMANN

Karen Levitov, Director and Curator

**Karen Levitov:** I wanted to start with the exhibition title, *Double Portrait*, and discuss your work as an artist couple. You each create your own body of work, yet with adjoining studios and lives, there is a deep, underlying connection between your studio practices.

**Charley Friedman:** One of the reasons why it works so well is because we're able to work in each other's domain without encroaching on the other's space. I really enjoy getting into Nancy's art and ideas. When she asks me a question it's important to put on a Nancy hat and vice versa. It's like the moon and the ocean. They both are separate, but affect one another. It flows rather well in our process together.

**Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez:** We always look and critique one another. For example, I had this idea about taking the image of Spanish colonial lace from a painting and turning it into sculpture. I made a weave of pearls and Charley came in and said "Oh this would be great with a light!" And it became a piece called *Self-Portrait with Papaya*.

**Charley:** Influencing each other goes from critiquing and conceptualizing to materializing the process.

**Nancy:** We are both always reading about identity and political issues. Charley gravitates towards Jewish history, Jewish philosophers, writers and humorists. Being from Colombia, I constantly read about Spanish colonial versus Native American history, and about the way that the colony worked in the Americas and its trajectory until today with its effects on contemporary culture.

**Karen:** Nancy, you have a lot of narrative elements in your work. And Charley, you often have figures—characters in a certain sense—that populate your pieces. How do characters and storytelling figure into your works?

**Charley:** For *Looking at the Sun*, I made a large yellow pencil drawing. I also made a small Muppet-like figure. Nancy came in and envisioned the figure and drawing together and realized the narrative connection between the two works.

**Nancy:** I'm a storyteller. For example, I made a sculpture with a wood bird sitting on driftwood that resembled a nest. Charley helped me conceptualize it in space.

**Charley:** I can look at every piece that I have done and think, Nancy is in it in some way, either through its narrative or formal structure. An artist is always having a conversation with their time, moment and place. We are foolish if we are not porous to that interplay.

**Karen:** Have you ever made a collaborative piece or is that something you would consider doing?

**Nancy:** We collaborate through Fiendish Plots. Fiendish Plots is our curatorial space in Lincoln, Nebraska. We invite mature artists that have developed voices and we show them because we love their work and there is something that connects to us.

**Karen:** Both of your work is self reflective at the same that it has a dialogue with the greater society.

**Charley:** Artwork is always in a direct conversation with the greater society that it is conceived. The drawings for *Science Project* first appeared in my sketchbook in 1998. When I fabricated the piece in 2011, it reflected my ecstatic demeanor. Artwork always plugs into its time. *Science Project* is a piece about connecting on a deep sensorial level, the moment of NOW—not past or future.

**Karen:** Nancy, your work connects that present to both the past and the future, perhaps through a narrative element.

**Nancy:** I created an installation, called *Travelers and Settlers*, where I carved boats and used readymades. I placed these objects on tables indicating the passing of time. I put a small pre-Columbian figure on a boat at the end of the piece thus creating a metaphor that indicated racial and historical ancestry, and a narrative about where we started





# KAREN AND NANCY FRIEDEMANN-SÁNCHEZ

curator, Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery

and where we are going. It is a piece that is a sensual and analytical reflection about American history.

**Karen:** Charley, there is both an amazing utopia as well as an underlying dystopia in your work, especially the squirrel piece. Can you provide some context for this?

**Charley:** For *The New Deal*, I used squirrels as both themselves and as proxies for humans. It's an allegory about the current ideological shift in our nation and how we are both resisting and aligning ourselves with our current government. Squirrels are friendly unassuming creatures but when they are in a mass, they become threatening.

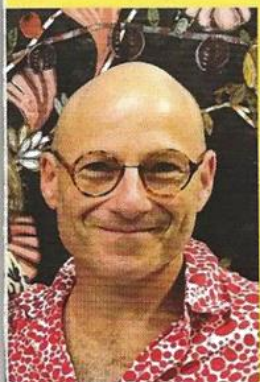
**Karen:** You both use elements from nature—plants, animals, eggs, rivers, gardens—in ways that are metaphorical and poetic and also potentially have political and societal implications.

**Charley:** Materials always have a spiritual and political dimension depending how you prioritize their inherent properties. I try to choreograph each piece so it unfolds like an onion or a dance.

**Karen:** Nancy, can you talk about your use of the body specifically in relation to migration and feminism?

**Nancy:** For the *Castas* paintings, I asked Latina women to pose like they are going through a TSA airport security machine in the "hands up" position.

**Karen:** "Hands up, don't shoot"—the phrase that became a symbol of the Black Lives Matter movement after the police shooting of unarmed teenager Michael Brown in 2014.



**Nancy:** Exactly. For all of us going through TSA machines it becomes a vulnerable experience related to being a Latina, the Other.

**Karen:** Can you talk about the meaning of the word *Casta*?

**Nancy:** *Casta* means caste. The *Casta* paintings were a genre of painting created during Spanish colonization of Central and South America. They reflected miscegenation. The colonists annotated intermixing of race and place in society. There were sixteen categorizations: Mestiza, Castiza, Parda, Coyote, China Cambuja, etc. "Otherness" is our contemporary caste system.

**Karen:** Charley, in your performance pieces, you take on different personas. Can you talk about the element of performance in your work?

**Charley:** All of my artwork is performative. For me, performance is about connecting ideas through the body. Whether it's a character, photo or sculpture is inconsequential. Often, this connection is on a psychological and emotional level. As for *Garden*, it is 'grown' every time it is installed in a new environment and so carries the weight of the moment it's recreated. It's not static. It's a conversation with the architecture and environment. *Science Project* is performative because it's constructed to interact with the viewers on a sensorial level. The last live performance I did was the *Talisman* on 14th Street [in Manhattan]. It was 100% improvisational. I had to gauge how I was going to connect with each passerby in a genuine and honest manner so each person would open up to the *Talisman* and not just take it for schmaltzy slapstick.

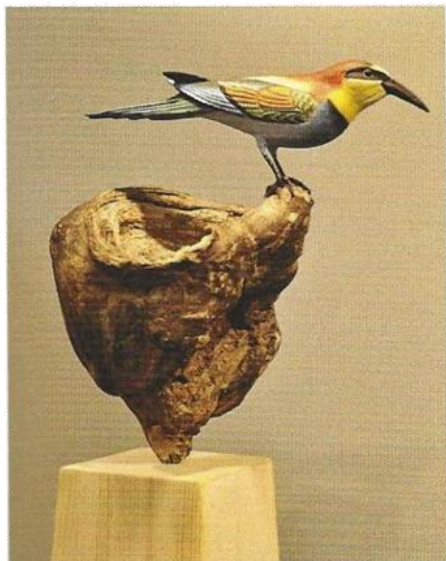
**Karen:** The little figure in *Looking at the Sun* reminds me of the *Talisman* figure. Is that one of your characters or personas?

**Charley:** Both reference Muppets in shape, form and ideology harkening back to a time when diversity, equality and the notion of a "more perfect union" were seen as attainable goals and positive U.S. values.

**Karen:** And there is the element of humor in your work.

**Charley:** Humor is what makes us human. As an art material, it has a nuance and economy that isn't preachy or dogmatic but allows an idea to slowly ooze into a body through osmosis of idea. Also, humor isn't bound to a material so I can freely explore different processes.





*Anonymous*



*Travelers and Settlers*



*Cornucopia*

## NANCY FRIEDEMANN-SÁNCHEZ

Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez received an MFA from New York University and a BFA from Otis Art Institute.

Recent solo exhibitions include: Union for Contemporary Art, Omaha; Kentler International Drawing Center, New York; Black & White Gallery, Brooklyn; Museum of Nebraska Art, Kearney; Neues Kunstforum, Cologne and Frost Museum, Miami.

Selected group shows include: The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts; La Biental de Cuenca, Ecuador; Portland Museum of Art; The Museum of the University of New Mexico; El Museo del Barrio, New York; Museo del Arte de Puerto Rico; Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Bogotá; San Luis Obispo Art Center, California and Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York.

She has been awarded a Nebraska Arts Council Distinguished Artist Award, a Smithsonian Artist Fellowship, a Puffin Foundation grant, a Pollock-Krasner grant and a National Association of Latino Arts and Culture grant. She has also been nominated to the Rema Hort Mann and to the Anonymous Was a Woman Foundation and was selected for the Feminist Art Base at the Brooklyn Museum in New York.

She has been a resident at PV Art, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Art OMI, New York; Fountainhead, Miami; Tamarind Institute, New Mexico; Yaddo, New York; Gasworks, London; Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts and the Bronx Museum for the Arts, New York.

Public collections include: El Museo del Barrio, The Cleveland Museum, The Museum University of New Mexico, El Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá, El Museo de Arte Moderno, Cali Colombia, and el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Bogotá, Colombia.

[nancyfriedemann.com](http://nancyfriedemann.com)

# DOUBLE PORTRAIT

Charley Friedman and Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez

January 20 - February 17, 2018

**Reception:** Saturday, January 20, 7pm

**Artist Talk:** Monday, January 22, 2:30pm

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Working with Charley Friedman and Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez on the preparation of this exhibition and publication has been an exhilarating experience. Their creative energy and generous time spent talking with students, visiting graduate studios and presenting an Artist Talk are greatly appreciated. I thank them for their enthusiasm for the project and for sharing their work with the Stony Brook community.

I would also like to thank the Art Department and the staff of the Staller Center for the Arts, notably Alan Inkles, Director, and Samantha Clink, Gallery and Community Relations Associate. Many thanks as well to our student gallery assistants.

*Double Portrait* and the 2017-2018 Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery schedule are made possible by a generous grant from the Paul W. Zuccaire Foundation. Additional funding is provided by the County of Suffolk and the Friends of Staller Center. I am very grateful for their support.

Karen Levitov  
Director and Curator



Paul W. Zuccaire  
GALLERY

Staller Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5425, 631.632.7240

ZuccaireGallery@stonybrook.edu  
<http://ZuccaireGallery.stonybrook.edu>



## Gallery Hours

Tuesday-Friday, 12-4 pm. Also open during intermission and one hour prior to most Staller Center season performances. Free Admission.

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COVER: Charley Friedman, *Looking at the Sun* (detail);  
Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez, *Castas-India Gentil* (detail)

INSIDE FLAPS: Charley Friedman, *Chasid in the Woods*;  
Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez, *Castas-China*

## Checklist of the Exhibition

All works courtesy  
of the artists

### Charley Friedman

*Garden*, 2003-present  
Hollow eggs, yolk,  
resin, pins  
Dimensions variable

*Looking at the Sun*, 2012  
Color pencil on paper,  
magic sculpt, felt  
Figure size 9 x 3 x 2"; Total  
installation 96 x 168 x 72"

*The New Deal*, 2016  
Wax, felt, light bulbs,  
electrical cords, wood  
Dimensions variable

*One Hour Smile*,  
1995, 2005, 2015  
Three videos, 1 hour each

*Science Project*, 2014  
Beach balls, motor,  
machined parts, steel rod  
132 x 96"

### Nancy Friedemann- Sánchez

*Anonymous*, 2015  
Wood pedestal, Nebraska  
carved bird, and driftwood  
11.5 x 11.5 x 65"

*Castas paintings*, 2017  
(China, Morisca, Parda,  
Castiza, India Gentil,  
Sambaiga)  
India ink on Tyvek,  
readymade mask and  
Spanish peineta  
80 x 40" each

*Cornucopia*, 2017  
India ink on Tyvek  
135 x 90"

*Self-Portrait with Papaya*,  
2013  
Pearls, dibond panels,  
lamps  
48 x 380 x 18"

*Travelers and Settlers*, 2016  
Mixed media  
Dimensions variable

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY  
**STALLER**  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS



