

The Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) announces
Ñande Róga: The Feliciano Centurión Archival Collection

On view March 16–June 2, 2023

The Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) is delighted to announce the opening of *Ñande Róga: The Feliciano Centurión Archival Collection*, an exhibition exploring the work, communities, and context of Paraguayan artist Feliciano Centurión (1962–1996). During his brief but prolific career, Centurión developed a unique body of work inspired by folk art and queer aesthetics, often incorporating household textiles, references to the natural world, and poignant phrases through which he reflected on personal and universal experience.

Ñande róga means “our home” in Guaraní, which has been the primary language spoken in Paraguay since before the Spanish colonial conquest. There are two ways of addressing the first-person plural in Guaraní: *ñande* refers to an inclusive “we,” where everyone participates, while *ore* implies that some member of a social group has been excluded. This difference, which is absent in Spanish and English, reveals an insightful understanding of community and belonging.

Inspired by this notion of collectivity, this exhibition reflects on the life and work of Centurión through his archival collection at ISLAA. Centurión’s practice was profoundly influenced by the countryside of Paraguay, the underground cultural scene of Buenos Aires in the 1990s, and the LGBT liberation movements of postdictatorship Argentina. Resulting from the resonances of these various communities and his deep interest in Paraguayan crafts such as *ñandutí* textiles, his works are evocative of domesticity, care, healing, and spirituality.

The exhibition brings together drawings, textiles, and sculptural objects with archival materials, many of which have never been published or shown publicly. These items offer insight into Centurión’s studio practice and his relationships with other artists and thinkers working in Buenos Aires and Asunción in the 1990s. For Centurión—a gay man living through the most tumultuous years of the ongoing AIDS epidemic in Latin America—the bonds of friendship he made during this period were a powerful grounding force in both his art and his life. It is clear from the works and archival ephemera presented in *Ñande Róga* that Centurión’s work existed within the inclusive Guaraní “we.”

INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES ON
LATIN AMERICAN ART

This linguistic nuance fueled the development of an installation design roughly composed of concentric circles, in which original artworks are surrounded by a perimeter of facsimiles of press clippings, documentary photographs, and notes drawn from Centurión's archival collection at ISLAA. Together, they provide new perspectives on the lives and practices of Centurión and his peers.

Ñande Róga: The Feliciano Centurión Archival Collection is curated by Eduardo Andres Alfonso, Angelica Arbelaez, María Carri, Rachel Eboh, Laura Hakel, Kyle Herrington, and Guy Weltchek, with guidance from Karin Schneider and ISLAA. This iteration is organized by Olivia Casa, ISLAA's exhibition and curatorial manager.

This exhibition was originally presented at the Hessel Museum of Art in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, in December 2021, as the culmination of a fall 2021 graduate course at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, led by Karin Schneider and supported by ISLAA as part of its Research Seminar Initiative.

#

Ñande Róga: The Feliciano Centurión Archival Collection will open with a reception on Thursday, March 16 from 5 to 8 PM. Guests are asked to sign up in advance using [this online form](#).

The exhibition is accompanied by a booklet featuring texts by the curators and Mónica Giron and designed by Ramón Tejada. Physical copies will be distributed free of charge at ISLAA, and a digital version is available to download at islaa.org.

ISLAA will offer free in-person tours of *Ñande Róga*, led by exhibition curators and ISLAA staff, on April 14, April 21, and May 5. To find out more and to register, please visit [this link](#).

ISLAA is open from 12 to 6 PM from Tuesday through Friday. Although walk-ins are allowed, visitors are encouraged to book appointments through ISLAA's [online scheduler](#).

For press inquiries, please email Olivia Casa, exhibition and curatorial manager, at olivia.casa@islaa.org.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Feliciano Centurión (1962–1996) was born in San Ignacio de las Misiones, Paraguay, in 1962 and settled in Argentina in 1974. Celebrated for his introspective work, he is best known for his embroidered and painted textiles that engage with folk art and queer aesthetics, produced using repurposed cloth and often embellished with diaristic phrases. Centurión was part of the group of artists associated with the gallery of the Centro

Cultural Ricardo Rojas at the Universidad de Buenos Aires in the 1990s and represented Paraguay in the fifth Havana Biennial in 1994. His first retrospective in the United States, *Feliciano Centurión: Abrigo*, was presented at Americas Society in New York in 2020.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Eduardo Andres Alfonso is an educator, writer, and curator. He was previously an adjunct lecturer at the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at the City College of New York and a visiting assistant tutor at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' School of Architecture. In 2018, he curated *The Personal Laboratory* and *The Hong Kong Journey*, exhibitions that examined the life and work of the architect Paul Rudolph at the Modulightor Building and the Center for Architecture in New York. Alfonso has also curated exhibitions with A plus A in Venice and King's Leap in New York and has published articles with *Pin-Up*, *Ocean Drive Magazine*, *V Magazine*, and *L'Officiel*. His work seeks to recover the historical adjacencies of art and architecture to refocus attention on the aesthetics of environments. He holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from the Cooper Union's Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture.

Angelica Arbelaez is an independent curator and researcher from Miami. She is currently the inaugural Rubio Butterfield Family Fellow at the Whitney Museum of American Art. She was previously the programs manager at Oolite Arts from 2017 to 2020, and the communications and events manager at Locust Projects from 2014 to 2017. She holds a master's degree from the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, and a bachelor's degree in art history from Florida International University.

Laura Hakel is a curator based in Buenos Aires and New York. She worked as a curator at the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires until 2020. There, she curated exhibitions such as *Andrés Aizicovich: Contact* (2019–20), *Flavia Da Rin: Who's That Girl?* (2019), *Mercedes Azpilicueta: Body Birds* (2018–19), *Gabriel Chaile: Patricia* (2017), and *Eccentrics and Ultra-Enlightened* (co-curated with Javier Villa and Sofía Dourron, 2016). She also commissioned works for the museum's public programs, special events, and online program. Hakel frequently contributes to exhibitions, art books, and other publications with essays, reviews, and editorial and curatorial work. Laura has a bachelor's degree in art history from the Universidad de Buenos Aires. In 2014, she participated in the Artists' Program at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella.

Guy Weltchek is a curator and artist currently based in Brooklyn. He has organized programming at Mana Contemporary, MoMA PS1, Clocktower Gallery, Newark Museum of Art, the Glove, and Brooklyn Fire Proof, as well as many other event spaces and venues in New York's tri-state area. In addition, he founded and directed the Metropolitan, an artist-run gallery and performance space located in Newark. Weltchek's curatorial practice centers around presenting performances, sound and new media installations, and

music. The artists with whom he works closely often exhibit in spaces such as nightclubs, DIY venues, and project spaces. He seeks to provide a framework for critical examination of these so-called nontraditional art practices so that they can be fully appreciated and experienced by a diverse and wide-ranging public.

María Carri is a political scientist, educator, and curator from Buenos Aires. Her interdisciplinary practice explores new ways to promote critical thinking and collaborative work. She has been part of a popular education school for adults inspired by Brazilian pedagogist Paulo Freire's theory in IMPA, a major cooperative metallurgical factory in Buenos Aires. She has worked in the education department at the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, where she took part in the Curators project and organized the Parliament Museum series. Carri holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Buenos Aires University and pursued postgraduate studies in Argentine and Latin American art history from the Universidad de San Martín and social and political anthropology from the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales. In 2018, she was selected to participate in the Artists' Program at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella.

Rachel Eboh was born in Chicago and has been a resident of New York for the past ten years. Prior to attending the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, she was the director of Tina Kim Gallery. During her time at the gallery, she worked on contemporary art exhibitions such as *Davide Balliano (2021)*, *Lee Seung Jio: Nucleus (2020)*, *Tania Pérez Córdova: Short Sight Box (2020)*, and *Minouk Lim: Mamour (2017)* and helped mount historic solo exhibitions by Korean modern masters such as *Kim Tschang-Yeul: New York to Paris (2019)*, *Suh-Seung-Won: Early Works 1960s–1980s (2019)*, and *Suki Seokyeong Kang: Jeong (2018)*. For her bachelor's degree, Eboh studied at NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Her degree, *Elements of the Art World*, investigated the industry's intersections between artists, collectives, writers, museums, nonprofit spaces, galleries, collectors, and auction houses.

Kyle Herrington is a curator and mixed-media artist originally from Indianapolis. He has been curating professionally for over fifteen years, most recently serving as the director of exhibitions and events at the Indianapolis Art Center, where he organized and curated more than forty exhibitions. Notable exhibitions include *Body Building: The Art of the Human Figure (2020)*, *Weave Wars: New Perspectives on Fiber (2016)*, and *Art, Sex and Humor: Selections from the Kinsey Institute (2013)* in partnership with the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction. Herrington now lives and works in Kingston, New York, while pursuing a graduate degree at the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College; he also served as the curatorial fellow for the Fire Island Artist Residency in summer 2022. His current research interests include expanding the queer legacies of middle America and the Midwest, DIY and ad-hocism as worldmaking methodologies, and the intersection of queer kink and fetish communities with practices of craft and the handmade.

ABOUT ISLAA'S EXHIBITIONS PROGRAM

Inaugurated in 2019, ISLAA's exhibitions program presents curatorial projects that expand existing narratives of modern and contemporary art by focusing on specific figures, movements, and topics in Latin American art. Curators are invited to draw from ISLAA's library, archive, and collection to develop original research and produce new exhibitions for presentation at ISLAA's New York City space. The program seeks to foster new approaches within the curatorial field and to offer scholars and arts professionals the opportunity to realize exceptional exhibitions that promote the visibility and study of Latin American art.

ABOUT THE ISLAA RESEARCH SEMINAR INITIATIVE

The ISLAA Research Seminar Initiative works in partnership with academic institutions to support graduate seminars that culminate in student-organized exhibitions. Each seminar takes as its point of departure a special collection from ISLAA's archives, inviting new research by emerging curators and encouraging critical engagements with the lived histories of Latin American artists and movements.

ABOUT ISLAA

The Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) expands scholarship and public engagement with art from Latin America through its program of exhibitions, publications, lectures, and partnerships with universities and art institutions.