

A NEW DEVOTIONAL

CRYSTALLE LACOUTURE AND KEVIN UMAÑA

January 7, 2022 - February 6, 2022

**Opening Reception:
Friday, January 7 from 6 to 8 pm**

**A Solo Voice + Voice Bath with Odeya Nini
Special One-Night Event on Sunday, January 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm**



(December 9, 2021 -- Brookline, MA) -- Praise Shadows Art Gallery opens its 2022 program with *A New Devotional*, a two-person exhibition featuring Boston-based Crystalle Lacouture and Kansas City-based Kevin Umaña. The artists, who have followed one another's work for years but are exhibiting together for the first time, maintain artistic practices that are rooted in abstraction, color, and memory. Lacouture's paintings will include her *MAMA* series, works on paper created as a daily ritual, while Umaña will present new ceramic tablets shown for the first time in Boston. Intended specifically for the start of the year, *A New Devotional* brings together artworks that emphasize the artist as a gift-giver and as medium for emotional care. The exhibition is on view through February 6.

The artists will be present for the public opening reception on Friday, January 7, from 6 to 8 pm.

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A special musical program by Los Angeles-based Odeya Nini, a critically acclaimed experimental vocalist and contemporary composer, will activate the exhibition space on Sunday, January 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. The event will include a private walkthrough of the exhibition with Lacouture and Umaña, Nini's vocal performance, *A Solo Voice*, followed by a vocal sound meditation, *Voice Bath*. This event is ticketed and limited to 15 guests. Register [here](#).

The exhibition will feature 18 of Lacouture's *MAMA* paintings: gouache and colored pencil works that are part of a diaristic practice. According to the artist, these are "created with the intention of offering protection to my ill mother and all other mothers facing difficulty during the pandemic." They use an unexpected, yet symbolically meaningful canvas: SCORE KEEPER shooting targets. The function of this ready-made material is transformed from a medium meant to be mutilated and discarded, to one that radiates energy and protection via Lacouture's sonic waves of colors and geometries. Rather than obfuscating the concentric rings of the targets, she harnesses the power in their symbolism and in their active use to create a new visual language.

While Lacouture's paintings appear shield-like in their form and in their expression of protection, Umaña's ceramic paintings are akin to tablets that record memory and time. Through the use of bold colors, dynamic gestures, and expressive marks, his work proposes a dialogue between the systematic and the open-ended. The artist will present new ceramics that disrupt the formal rectangular structure of the tablet, while maintaining the rich use of color, line and texture that he is celebrated for. While certain shapes, lines, form, may spark recognition, Umaña's work is open to interpretation, allowing his viewers to draw upon their own experiences and associations.

About the artists

Crystalle Lacouture is an artist based in Boston and North Adams, MA. She received her BFA in Painting/Printmaking from Skidmore College in 2000, where she received the Pamela Weidenman Award for Excellence in Printmaking. While living in NYC, Crystalle was a longtime assistant to activist artists Nancy Spero and Leon Golub and a printmaker and Resident Key Holder at the Lower East Side Printshop. She has attended residencies at Surf Point Foundation, Vermont Studio Center, the Vanguard Mastheads, the Contemporary Artist Center, and Room 83 Spring. Her work is in the collections of Fidelity, the Hammond Museum, and Skidmore College. In addition to her full-time studio practice and other curatorial projects Crystalle is a curator at Tourists, a hotel near Mass MoCA in North Adams, MA. She exhibits her work throughout New England and New York.

Kevin Umaña (born in Los Angeles, CA) received a B.F.A. from San Francisco State University with a degree in Printmaking. He is the co-founder of The Ekru Project and a contributor to The Coastal Post. In 2021, he completed his first solo exhibition, *Wax and Wane* with David Richard Gallery in New York. In 2019, he was an artist in residence for the Center For Book Arts. He has exhibited nationally and internationally with DC Moore Gallery, NY; Joshua Liner Gallery, NY; SIM Gallery, Reykjavik; Koppel Project Hive, London; In Live, Taipei; Bass & Reiner, San Francisco; and in 2018 completed a residency through the Sírn Residency in Reykjavik, Iceland and Plop Residency in London, England. He has collaborated with Condé Nast, Wired Magazine, London College of Music and Slowdown Studio. In 2017, he created a permanent installation at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.

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About Praise Shadows LLC

Established in 2020, Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a commercial gallery space in the Boston area showing the work of emerging and mid-career artists.

We believe that the art ecosystem is filled with untapped potential, and our work is grounded by partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship — exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, and original concepts that no one has ever tried before. Praise Shadows Art Partners advises artists and companies in the creative industries on strategic partnerships and marketing. Our work is local, global, and virtual.
www.praiseshadows.com

313A Harvard Street, Brookline, MA 02446

Wednesday - Sunday 11am - 6pm

IMAGE CAPTION:

Left - Crystalle Lacouture, *MAMA Drawing #75*, 2021, gouache on Score Keeper shooting target, 11" x 16", image by Lisa Neighbors.

Right - Kevin Umaña, *The Dynamics of a Ringing Church Bell*, Glaze on Black Stoneware, 13" x 9", 2021, image courtesy the artist.

MEDIA CONTACT:

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Exhibition Media Kit [here](#)

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