

MUSEO JUMEX PRESENTS LARI PITTMAN:
LO QUE SE VE, SE PREGUNTA, A SURVEY
OF THE ARTIST'S KALEIDOSCOPIC PAINTINGS

GALLERY 3
 04.NOV.2022 - 26.FEB.2023

Mexico City, October 26, 2022 –This fall, Museo Jumex will present *Lo que se ve, se pregunta*, a survey exhibition of the Colombian American contemporary artist Lari Pittman (USA, 1952), that spans four decades. On view from November 4, 2022, through February 26, 2023, the exhibition will showcase Pittman’s colorful practice of creating multi-layered paintings that have challenged formal pictorial space, cultural representation, and visual culture since the 1980s.

Lo que se ve, se pregunta is organized by guest curator Connie Butler, Chief Curator of the Hammer Museum, who presented Pittman’s acclaimed retrospective, *Declaration of Independence*, at the Hammer Museum in 2019.

Butler says of the artist: “Pittman’s critical voice is one committed to the medium of painting while challenging its histories and traditions through the languages of craft and the decorative arts, that have been significantly influenced by Mexican culture as observed in both LA and the artist’s second home in Mexico.”

The title of the exhibition is a reference to one of the best-selling Mexican singers, songwriters, and actors, Juan Gabriel, whose witty response to questions about his sexuality, “Lo que se ve, no se pregunta,” (If you can see it, don’t ask about it) left his audience in a state of interpretation. Pittman put his own spin on the phrase, emphasizing the need to question what we see and what we do not, a constant enquiry for the artist. Often enigmatic, the artist’s compositions tend to mediate the tension between color, text and imagery, landscape and decoration, and chaos and order, with remarkable dexterity, often on a large scale.

Pittman has been at the forefront of painting for over four decades, developing a unique style of densely layered and kaleidoscopic signs, symbols, and patterns. Incorporating figuration, text, and embellishment while also examining gender, class, and race, Pittman’s work responds and pays close attention to political events that defined the late 20th century. Including the AIDS epidemic and the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement of the 1980s, as well as the visual and popular cultures throughout Latin America, a community in which he is surrounded and influenced by in Los Angeles.

Lo que se ve, se pregunta is composed of more than 50 works, including paintings, drawings, sculptures, and artists books, and includes from his earliest works—like a series of five painted gourds subtitled *Memento Mori*—to his

most recent work titled *Sparkling City With Egg Monuments*. The exhibition will be accompanied by a 96-page artist book titled *Imágenes explícitas de la naturaleza humana* [Explicit Images of Human Nature] (Fundación Jumex, 2022) and will consist of a series of drawings as well as an essay by the curator.

LARI PITTMAN

Lari Pittman (USA, 1952) was born in Los Angeles, California, and spent several years of his childhood living in Colombia. He began his undergraduate studies at the University of California Los Angeles and transferred to the California Institute of the Arts to study his bachelor's (1974) and master's degrees (1976). Throughout his artistic career, Pittman has developed a unique visual aesthetic that has positioned him as one of the most important painters of his generation. His detailed and complex compositions serve as an invitation to reflect on love and loss, life and death, sex, violence, decoration, and language. Filled with signs, symbols, and a fluidity that reflects a non-binary view of the world, Pittman distills the chaos of life into grand visual narratives. Pittman is Professor Emeritus at UCLA and has received numerous awards and honors including those from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, and the J. Paul Getty Trust Fund for the Visual Arts.

Lo que se ve, se pregunta is organized by Museo Jumex, Mexico City, in partnership with the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles and is guest curated by Connie Butler, Curator in Chief, Hammer Museum with Adriana Kuri Alamillo, Curatorial Assistant, Museo Jumex.

MUSEO JUMEX

Museo Jumex, Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo's main platform, opened its doors to the public in November 2013 as an institution devoted to contemporary art. Its aim is not only to serve a broad and diverse public, but also to be a laboratory for experimentation and innovation in the arts. Through its exhibitions, publications, research, and public programs, Museo Jumex familiarizes audiences with the concepts and contexts that inform current art practice. Through the use of critical and pedagogical tools, the museum's educational programs further the institution's commitment to build links between contemporary art and the public.

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