

# *Essays*

*Reynier Llanes*







## Timeless Origins

So much of human experience is about in-between-ness — what we call liminality — and the liminal space between the past and the future forms the core of the recent work of artist Reynier Llanes. Llanes (b. 1985) is a fast-rising art world star, whose symbolist narrative paintings underline not merely his immense talents as a realist but also his ability to conjure convincing not-quite-real realities of his own imagination. Indeed, Llanes' fascination with the blurred boundaries of time and existence, as well as the fine lines between mysticism, belief, and science, stem from his own experiences between two worlds; as a young emigré from Cuba, he came to the United States in 2007 at twenty-two years old and as an already enormously talented, academically-trained artist, but one who spent his whole life up to that point immersed in one set of traditions before fleeing his country to seek asylum in Florida.

This exhibition, allusively titled *Timeless Origins*, features paintings by Llanes that thus look forward and backward simultaneously, speaking to our 21st-century world of today and to the rich personal and shared cultural histories Llanes carries with him as a proudly Cuban-American artist based in Miami. Whether grounded in Cuba tradition or as if out of our dreams, every one of Llanes' vibrant, question-inducing paintings engages each of us at the intersect between our minds and our hearts. Truly, Llanes' paintings hover between familiar and unfamiliar, specific and universal, traditional and technological, drawing us in through the beauty of their composition and the themes that resonate with us collectively as people of here and now.

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