

# Here Comes the Sun

IRENE DE ANDRÉS  
KATHERINE KENNEDY  
JOIRI MINAYA  
ADA M. PATTERSON



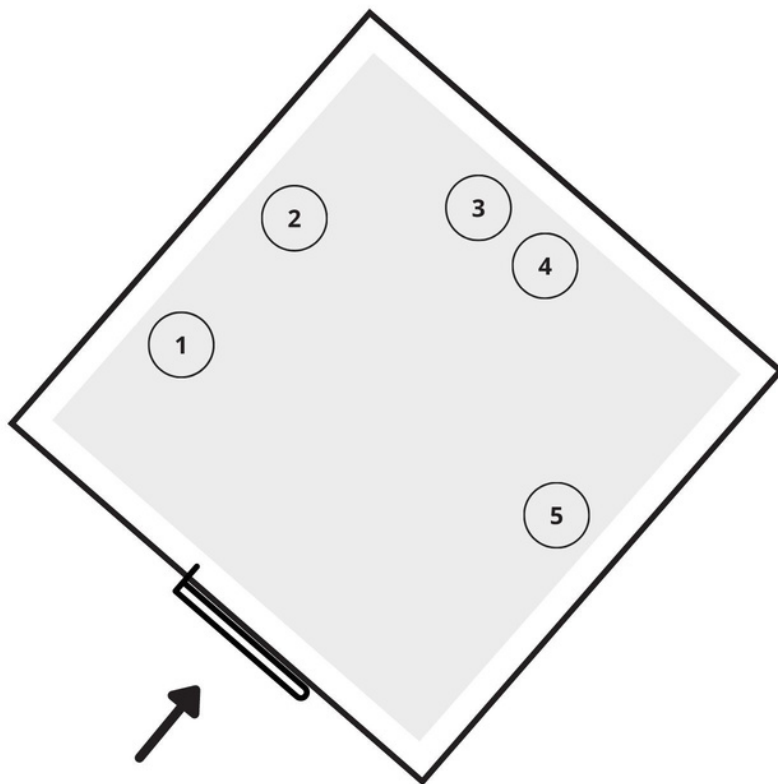
**Curated by NOOR ALÉ**

ART GALLERY OF BURLINGTON  
APRIL 22 - AUGUST 13, 2022

***Here Comes the Sun*** traces the origins of extractive tourism industries through the works of contemporary artists whose practices examine the interconnections between colonial legacies of crop plantations and service economies in the Caribbean. Gesturing towards the Caribbean's complicated relationship with the tourism industry, **Irene de Andres** and **Katherine Kennedy** deliver criticisms of international stakeholders and land developers who stand to benefit from the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the region. Countering the intrusive colonial gaze, **Joiri Minaya** exposes the fictitious representations of Caribbean nature and women as exotic. And **Ada M. Patterson** subverts images of crops to offer a lamentation on the place of sugar and tourism in the Barbadian cultural imaginary.

The selected works problematize the paradise trope ascribed to the Caribbean by the West and pose questions about its construction: What are the historical foundations of this trope, Why and for whom was it built? Together, these works resist the Western gaze, address the shared complicity between tourists, diasporic communities, and land developers, and critique reductive conceptions of the Caribbean as a site of escapism.

The title of the exhibition is borrowed from Jamaican-American writer Nicole Dennis-Benn's titular fictional novel. In *Here Comes the Sun* (2016), Dennis-Benn narrates the lives of three Jamaican women against a backdrop of power dynamics, economics, and gender inequities to advance conversations in the Global North about the complexity of tourism industries.



## 1. Irene de Andrés

*El Segundo Viaje (The Second Voyage)*,  
2015–2017

Wallpaper & photographs, dimensions variable

*El Segundo Viaje (The Second Voyage)* is a work comprised of photographs drawn from the Archivo General de Puerto Rico and travel records of the artist that examines the island's range of visitors, from the first colonizers to present-day tour operators. In the early 1500s, the Spanish empire colonized Puerto Rico, which briefly gained independence for forty-eight hours, in 1898, before becoming a territory of the United States, as it remains today. Puerto Rico's strategic location facilitated American and Spanish military control over the Atlantic Ocean, and in later years, this history of occupation was cast as a model that alleged economic prosperity as an outcome of colonial incursions. Puerto Rico—its Spanish name translates to “rich harbour”—once sheltered galleons of the West Indies fleet, and now receives Royal Caribbean cruise ships.

## 2. Ada M. Patterson

*Yuh Too Sweet*, 2018

Video, 3:53 minutes

*Yuh Too Sweet* is a visual poem reflecting on some of the crops that define and confine the Barbadian landscape. As a lamentation on the place of sugar and tourism in the Barbadian cultural imaginary, *Yuh Too Sweet* wonders how long our lived dedication to monocultures will persist. Subverting the images of these complicated crops, the work tells a different story that weaves together dreamy and sombre images of cane, sugar, horizons, and resorts. Against a rumbling percussion of boiling cane syrup, the voiceless narrator is mournful, unable to remember anything before these crops took root. Overall, *Yuh Too Sweet*

is an appeal for something else—*anything else*—in place of status quos that show no signs of changing.

## 3. Joiri Minaya

*Container #5*, 2020, and *Container #3*, 2017

C-prints on Sintra boards, 40 x 60 inches each

*Containers* is a series of photographs in which Minaya wears bodysuits with tropical prints and interacts with landscapes that seem natural but are manufactured, echoing the constructed aspect of her fabric encasings. The series reflects on how femininity is constructed in relation to nature as imagined by an imperial male gaze that demands leisure and pleasure, and tends to be foreign and patriarchal. Minaya was forced to adopt the pose dictated by the shape in which the bodysuit is sewn. These poses were created in response to images found by the artist during a Google search for “Dominican women.” Examining the performativity of these poses, we see that Minaya's *Containers* recall art historical tropes and the conventions of ethnographic photography, which in turn evolved into photographing people for tourism marketing, again casting individuals as “available” for Western consumption. This series raises critical dialogues about visual traditions—painting, photography, and advertisement—and through Minaya's work she reflects upon the action of inhabiting these pre-conceived roles in order to sabotage them.

*Container #3* was taken on a manicured beach in the Dominican Republic, where sand and rocks were removed to alter the beach's shape, and lighter toned sand was brought in from elsewhere. This illusory construction of a “deserted” or “virgin” island awaiting occupation, together with the artist's bodysuit—that combines tropical prints of pink plumerias on a blue background—creates a dialogue

about the conventions of landscape photography. These visual tropes are interrupted by the artist's pose, the forceful binding of the bodysuit, and sabotaged by her eerie gaze that unsettles and gazes back at the observer through eye-holes.

Photographed in the National Botanical Gardens of Santo Domingo, Container #5 evokes the façade of wilderness, exposed through the slivers of concrete floor where the artist stands. In this photograph, natural sunlight appears controlled like studio lighting, an effect that emphasizes the contrast between nature and construction. The bodysuit, which features palm leaves, a pattern associated with jungles, that harmonizes with foliage in the background. With hands sewn to the thighs, this bodysuit forces the artist to be in an awkward pose—partially but not fully standing. Yet, the artist looks down upon us with a gaze that is assertive.

#### 4. Joiri Minaya

*Redecode: a tropical theme is a great way to create a fresh, peaceful, relaxing atmosphere*, 2015

Wallpaper, wheat paste, dimensions variable

*Redecode*: a tropical theme is a great way to create a fresh, peaceful, relaxing atmosphere is a work that appropriates and pixelates American wallpaper designs from Don Loper's "Martinique" (1942) and Dorothy Draper's "Brazilliance" (1937). These designs romanticized tropical landscapes in spite of coinciding with a period of American military imposition throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Minaya's *Redecode* wallpaper features camouflaged QR codes containing links to text, collage, and online images that comment on this dissonance through

contemporary and historic references, for example: an image of two white men wearing US army pixelated camouflage uniforms; text from Wikipedia's page on "banana republic"; quotes from Beth Fowkes Tobin's book *Colonizing Nature: The Tropics in British Arts and Letters, 1760-1820* (2004), and references to fashion or interior design websites that provide tips on "how to use tropical prints freshen up your living spaces."

#### 5. Katherine Kennedy

*Biorhythms*, 2019

Video, 5:36 minutes

*Biorhythms* is a video from Kennedy's ongoing series *Invasive Species* (2019–ongoing). This body of work interrogates the ideas of escapism often used by tourists and the nostalgia sometimes projected by diasporic communities onto the Caribbean landscape. By transfiguring these shells with synthetic materials, Kennedy creates a gaudy, fantasy world full of both beauty and farce to ask what an escape looks like for someone entrenched in the realities of this region. Can the Caribbean's beauty be enjoyed or celebrated, while also problematizing its exploitation of the Caribbean and pushing back against a one-dimensional reading of this space? *Biorhythms* also addresses expectations of life cycles and natural beauty, with the decorated shells becoming animated only when covered in synthetic material. It offers a somewhat ironic depiction of how decay works in this fictional environment, as the shells become still and lifeless after reverting to their natural states.

**Irene de Andrés** graduated in Fine Arts at Universidad Complutense of Madrid in 2009 and did a Master of Research and Artistic Production. She has been one of the artists in residency at Escuela FLORA ars + natura, in Bogotá, Colombia (Artistic Residency Program sponsored by AC/E) and at The Harbor – Beta Local, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Recently, she has finished a Residency at Academia de España en Roma (Italy).

A selection of her grants and prizes includes Circuitos de Artes Plásticas 2012, Generaciones 2013, Injuve 2014 and Ayudas a la Creación Visual Vegap 2015 and Ciutat de Palma 2015. Recently, Irene's work has been shown at MuHKA (Museum of Contemporary Art of Antwerp), MACE (Museum of Contemporary art of Ibiza), IFA Galerie Berlin and in the Second Edition of Trienal de Frestas at Sesc Sorocaba (Brasil). Her last solo shows took place at Museo Patio Herreriano of Valladolid and Espai 13 of Joan Miro Foundation in Barcelona.

Irene's work is strongly related to the fact she grew up in one of the most desired tourist destinations, for people looking for sun, beaches, and parties. A couple years ago, the artist finished a project related to five abandoned nightclubs in Ibiza, Donde nada ocurre (Where Nothing Happens), which approaches from different fields the outcome of the Island's tourism history. Now, she is exploring the analogies between tourism and colonization through the search of the predesigned paradise.

**Katherine Kennedy** is a Barbadian artist and writer. She graduated with a BA in Creative Arts (First Class Hons.) from Lancaster University, UK, and has exhibited locally, regionally, and internationally in Barbados,

London, Glasgow, the USA, Aruba, Jamaica, Nigeria, New Zealand, and South Korea to date. She currently works for the Fresh Milk Art Platform in Barbados as the Communications and Operations Manager and has contributed to ARC Magazine of contemporary Caribbean art as a Writer, Editor, and the Assistant to Director. Through these platforms, she has coordinated and co-managed programmes such as Caribbean Linked and Transoceanic Visual Exchange (TVE).

Katherine's visual practice is heavily tied to a sense of place, using interplay between organic and inorganic materials and imagery to interrogate the spectrum of belonging and displacement in different environments or cultural contexts. She has undertaken projects and residencies at the Insituto Buena Bista (IBB), Curaçao (2012); The Vermont Studio Center, USA (2013); Casa Tomada, Brazil (2013); Akademie Schloss Solitude, Germany (2014); and Punch Creative Arena, Barbados (2019 & 2020). Her written work has been published with platforms such as Sugarcane Magazine (Volume 1, Issue No. 3) and Robert & Christopher Publishers in the A-Z of Caribbean Art (2019). She has curated exhibitions such as Social Geometry: Expanded Drawing Practices by Barbadian Artists, Barbados (2019) and QUINTessence: (5) Stages of Change through Barbados' National Collections (2021), and was selected as a fellow in the CCCADI Afro-Caribbean Art Curatorial Fellowship in 2021.

**Joiri Minaya** (1990) is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work navigates binaries in search of in-betweenness, investigating the female body within constructions of identity, multi-cultural social spaces, and hierarchies. Recent works focus on questioning historic and contemporary representations of black and

brown womanhood in relation to an imagined tropical identity from a decolonial stance.

Born in New York, U.S, she grew up in the Dominican Republic. She graduated from the Escuela Nacional de Artes Visuales of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic (2009), the Altos de Chavón School of Design (2011) and Parsons the New School for Design (2013). She has participated in residencies like Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Guttenberg Arts, Smack Mellon, BronxArtSpace, Bronx Museum AIM Program, the NYFA Mentoring Program for Immigrant Artists, Transmedia Lab at MA Scène Nationale, Red Bull House of Art Detroit, Lower East Side Printshop, Art Omi, ISCP and Vermont Studio Center. Minaya has exhibited internationally across the Caribbean and the U.S. She is a grantee from Jerome Hill, BRIC's Colene Art Brown's Award, NY Artadia, the Nancy Graves Foundation, the Rema Hort Mann Foundation (Emerging Artist Grant), the Joan Mitchell Foundation (Emerging Artist and Painters and Sculptors Grants), Socrates Sculpture Park Emerging Artist Fellowship, the Great prize and the Audience Award XXV Concurso de Arte Eduardo León Jimenes, the Exhibition Prize Centro de la Imagen (D.R.), and the Great Prize of the XXVII Biennial at the Museo de Arte Moderno (D.R.).

**Ada M. Patterson** (b. 1994, Bridgetown) is an artist and writer based between Barbados and Rotterdam. She works with masquerade, performance, poetry, textiles, and video, looking at the ways storytelling can limit, enable, and complicate identity formation. Her recent work considers grief, elegy writing and archiving as tools for disrupting the disappearance of communities queered by different experiences of crisis. Patterson was the 2020 NLS Kingston Curatorial and Art

Writing Fellow. Exhibitions include "Life Between Islands: Caribbean-British Art 1950s – Now" at Tate Britain. Her writing has featured in Sugarcane Magazine, PREE, Mister Motley and Metropolis M.

**Noor Alé** is a curator, art historian, and writer. She is the Associate Curator at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto. Her curatorial practice examines the intersections of contemporary art with geopolitics, decolonization, and social justice. She has served in curatorial capacities at the Visual Arts Centre of Clarington, Bowmanville; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. She recently curated Sasha Huber: YOU NAME IT, The Power Plant; this is not an atlas, Visual Arts Centre of Clarington; and Valentin Brown: Welcome to My Regulated Body, Art Gallery of Windsor. She was awarded curatorial residencies at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and the Shanghai Curators Lab. She holds an MA in Art History from The Courtauld Institute of Art, where she specialized in photography, film, and video in global contemporary art.

Since 2016, she has shared a collaborative curatorial practice with Claudia Mattos. They are founders of AXIS, an independent curatorial laboratory dedicated to socially-engaged contemporary art. Together, they co-curated EXTRACOLONIAL: Reflections for Action, Sur Gallery, Toronto, and LAW & (DIS)ORDER, Vtape, Toronto. Forthcoming exhibitions include OF THE SACRED, Critical Distance Centre for Curators, Toronto, and The Falling Sky, Trinity Square Video, Toronto.

# PROGRAMS

## **In Conversation: Noor Alé & Joiri Minaya**

**Online | July 13, 2022 6 – 7pm**

Join us in this conversation between Dominican-American multidisciplinary artist Joiri Minaya and Noor Alé, curator of *Here Comes the Sun*. Minaya will speak about her artistic practice, and the ways it disrupts the imagined representations of the Caribbean, and engage Noor in an in-depth conversation about the intersections between the histories of photography, extractive tourism industries, and the female body, themes that are evinced in her lens-based works in the exhibition. Registration available on the exhibition's webpage.

## **Echo: BIPOC Book-club**

**Online | April 25, May 30, June 27, 6:30 - 8:00 pm**

**Free**

Hosted by AGB's Curatorial Assistant, Jasmine Mander, *Echo* is a book-club centering the voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour authors and thinkers. Prioritizing BIPOC community members, this group offers participants the opportunity to explore a new way forward.

The booklist features critical texts by BIPOC authors and is carefully constructed to inspire open and honest conversation. The group meets monthly to dissect and understand ideas related to political activism including race, identity, disability, tokenization, abuse, prison abolition and oppression through reading. *Echo* promotes reading as a communal act to inspire conversation in a safe space for ideas to reverberate and grow.

Books are mailed a month in advance of each session or available at the AGB for pick-up. Readers of all levels are welcome and encouraged to share theory thoughts, interpretations, and experiences. Participants are encouraged to finish, or read as much as possible, of the recommended reading prior to each meeting for discussion. Participants can join any, or all, sessions. *Echo* is a free program with limited spaces so please register a month in advance to receive your copy.

**What we're reading in April:** *They Said This Would Be Fun: Race, Campus Life, and Growing Up*, written by Eternity Martis

**What we're reading in May:** *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*, written by Angela Y. Davis

**What we're reading in June:** *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Alice Wong

For more information on memberships, programs, and more, visit our website, or connect with us!

### **Hours of Operation**

Tuesday - Friday 12:00 - 5:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Sunday & Monday CLOSED

**1333 Lakeshore Road  
Burlington, ON. L7S 1A9**

**(905) 632-7796 | [www.agb.life](http://www.agb.life) | [@artgallburl](https://www.instagram.com/artgallburl)**

Noor Alé's *Here Comes the Sun* has been generously sponsored by DJB Chartered Professional and the Ontario Arts Council. Noor is grateful for support she received from Suzanne Carte, Senior Curator, and Jasmine Mander, Curatorial Assistant, in mounting this show.

The AGB is supported by the Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Canada Council for the Arts. ECHO is generously supported by the Halton Region Investment Fund.

Installation: Category 5, Nick Breton, Lexie Nelson

Video Documentation: Vuk Dragojevic

Cover Image Credit: Irene de Andrés, *El Segundo Viaje (The Second Voyage)*, 2015–2017. Wallpaper and photographs, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

We acknowledge that the land where we are located is part of the ancient Dish With One Spoon Treaty and also the Brant Tract Purchase, Treaty No. 3 3/4 of 1795, 1797 and 2010, and we are grateful to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River for sharing this territory with us.

