 Miller Theatre and The Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University unveil a new installation, commissioned for the Miller Theatre lobby:

**Joiri Minaya's Redecode II: La Dorada** from her *Tropical Surfaces* series

**On display through June 28, 2019**

Marking the sixth collaboration between The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery and Miller Theatre Curated by Deborah Cullen, Director and Chief Curator of the Wallach Art Gallery

Miller Theatre will host a creative conversation and reception with Joiri Minaya and Deborah Cullen Thursday, September 20, 5:00 p.m.
FREE and open to the public

millertheatre.com/events/artist-talk-and-reception-with-joiri-minaya

From Miller Theatre Executive Director Melissa Smey:
“To celebrate Miller Theatre’s 30th Anniversary Season, we commissioned six remarkable artists to create new work—five composers and one visual artist—and the first on display is by multidisciplinary artist Joiri Minaya. The transformation of the Miller lobby has been a highlight of the last five seasons, as we’ve commissioned
visual artists to use the lobby walls as their canvas. I am thrilled at the opportunity to work with the incredibly talented Joiri Minaya, and eager for audiences to interact with her installation throughout the year.”

This August, the Dominican-American artist Joiri Minaya transforms the lobby of Miller Theatre with a new installation from her series Tropical Surfaces, in which she specifically deconstructs and re-imagines tropical design, pointing to it as an invention of the Global North’s "imaginary."

Joiri Minaya’s work focuses on the construction of the female subject in relation to nature and landscape in a “tropical” context, shaped by a foreign gaze that demands leisure and pleasure. Like nature, the feminine has been imagined throughout history as tamed, idealized, and exoticized. Minaya revises existing objects that engage in this form of representation, thus provoking questions.

In her series Tropical Surfaces, Minaya subverts and appropriates gendered consumer products including wallpaper and clothes, as well as tropes of domesticity and decoration. Her critical reclamation of this territory involves a contemporary disruption of tropical pattern design. The roots of such design in botanical illustration also conjures an original use value for such popular depictions, in their promotion of the resources to be found in
For Miller Theatre’s *Redcode II: La Dorada*, Minaya departs from a monumental work held by the Cooper Hewitt, *El Dorado*, a twenty-four panel scenic wallpaper designed in 1848 for the oldest continuously-operating wallpaper company, Zuber et Cie (est. 1787, France). *El Dorado* depicts the idealized natural and manmade riches of the four continents from a European, and colonial perspective. The transformation of this vision into such an elaborate wallpaper was necessary for the delectation of those who could afford it; its production required the hand-printing of 1,554 distinct woodblocks in 210 various colors over the entire 42-foot-long span.

Zuber’s original wallpaper positions Europe at the center of the design, representing it as the only continent with steps in the foreground, which seems to invite the viewer to a terrace overlooking the rest of the world. The other continents’ architecture is depicted far in the background, with wild, exquisitely detailed depictions of nature covering their foreground, suggesting an adventurous, exploratory invitation to enter the landscape. Minaya uses pixilation to sabotage these design choices, posing questions of visibility and refusal, while flattening and mixing the planes of foreground and background equally. In addition, Europe has been isolated in its own separate wall on one side of the lobby, while the other continents band together on the other side. Not only does Minaya select and reorganize the continents, but she embeds interactive QR codes in the design, camouflaged among the pixels. They contain links that can be scanned with smartphones, revealing found text, images, and videos from the internet, as well as content uploaded by the artist, carefully curated and specifically placed within the wallpaper as part of the piece’s commentary.

“Minaya’s *Redcode* wallpapers disturb any easy, decorative assimilations of our shared colonial burdens,” says Deborah Cullen, Director and Chief Curator of the The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, which has collaborated with Miller Theatre on the installation. “The artist’s pointed appropriations, redeployed with inserts and glitches, tease out a rich web of implications, reminding us of the complex legacy of history.”

This year’s site-specific exhibition is the sixth such collaboration between the Wallach Art Gallery and Miller Theatre. Minaya’s installation succeeds Lina Puerta’s *Manigua* from her *Botánico* series that adorned the walls last season. Previous murals were created by Tomo Mori, Scherezade Garcia, Maya Hayuk, and Vargas-Suarez Universal (see images below). Minaya’s installation will be displayed throughout the 2018-19 season, from September 4, 2018 – June 28, 2019, greeting thousands of concertgoers as they arrive for performances over the course of the year.

Minaya’s work is presented in conjunction with the exhibition *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, on view at the Wallach Art Gallery and Sugar Hill Children’s Museum of Art and Storytelling through September 23, 2018.

Miller Theatre will host a creative conversation and reception with Joiri Minaya and Deborah Cullen on Thursday, September 20, 2018, co-sponsored by the Columbia University Arts Initiative.
Located on Broadway at 116th Street, Miller Theatre’s lobby is open to the public Monday through Friday, from 10am to 6pm, and beginning two hours before each scheduled performance. (Summer hours through August 31: Monday & Tuesday 10am–6pm; Friday 10am–3pm).

Past Lobby Artwork Commissions
(2012-2018)

2017-18
Lina Puerta *Manigua* from the *Botánico Series*
[Read More]

2016-17
Tomo Mori
[Video] | [Read More]

2015-16
Scherezade Garcia
[Video] | [Read More]
Joiri Minaya
joiriminaya.com

Joiri Minaya (b. 1990) is a Dominican-American multi-disciplinary artist whose work deals with identity, otherness, self-consciousness and displacement. Her work generally 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 destabilizing historic and contemporary representations of an imagined tropical identity. Born in New York, she grew up in the Dominican Republic. She graduated from the Escuela Nacional de Artes Visuales (Santo Domingo), the Altos de Chavón School of Design (La Romana) and Parsons the New School for Design (New York). She has participated in residencies including Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Guttenberg Arts, Smack Mellon, BronxArtSpace, Bronx Museum’s AIM Program, the NYFA Mentoring Program for Immigrant Artists, Red Bull House of Art (Detroit) and Transmedia Lab at MA Scène Nationale (Montbéliard, France). She is currently a Lower East Side Printshop Keyholder Artist and a Socrates Sculpture Park Emerging Artist Fellow. Minaya has exhibited across the Caribbean and in the U.S. Her work has been awarded a Rema Hort Mann Grant, Joan Mitchell Foundation Emerging Artist Grant, and, in the Dominican Republic, the Audience Award at the XXV Concurso de Arte Eduardo León Jimenes, the Exhibition Prize of Centro de la Imagen, and the Great Prize of the XXVII Biennial at the Museo de Arte Moderno.

Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery
columbia.edu/cu/wallach

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery advances Columbia University’s historical, critical, and creative engagement with the visual arts. Serving as both a laboratory and forum, The Wallach Art Gallery offers opportunities for curatorial practice and discourse while bridging the diverse approaches to the arts at the University with a broader public.
Established in 1986, The Wallach Art Gallery is Columbia University’s premier visual arts space. The gallery is a platform for critically acclaimed exhibitions, a dynamic range of programming, and publications that have made lasting contributions to scholarship.

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**Miller Theatre at Columbia University**

[MillerTheatre.com](http://millertheatre.com)

Miller Theatre at Columbia University is the leading presenter of new music in New York City and one of the most vital forces nationwide for innovative programming. In partnership with Columbia University School of the Arts, Miller is dedicated to producing and presenting unique events, with a focus on contemporary and early music, jazz, opera, and multimedia performances. Founded in 1988, Miller Theatre has helped launch the careers of myriad composers and ensembles over the years, serving as an incubator for emerging artists and a champion of those not yet well known in the United States. A four-time recipient of the ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming, Miller Theatre continues to meet the high expectations set forth by its founders—to present innovative programs, support the development of new work, and connect creative artists with adventurous audiences.

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*Columbia University’s Miller Theatre is located north of the Main Campus Gate at 116th St. & Broadway on the ground floor of Dodge Hall.*

Directions and information are available online at [millertheatre.com](http://millertheatre.com) or via the Miller Theatre Box Office, at 212.854.7799.

For photos, please contact Arlene Kriv at 212/854-1488 or [ark2125@columbia.edu](mailto:ark2125@columbia.edu).

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For further information, press tickets, photos, and to arrange interviews, please contact Aleba & Co. at 212/206-1450 or [aleba@alebaco.com](mailto:aleba@alebaco.com).

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**PR for musical trailblazers**

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