

RC₂ GALLERY

MATEO BLANCO

Mateo Blanco is a gifted visual artist known for the remarkably vivid and beautiful portraits he has made of celebrities using unusual media. Among his best-known works are a portrait of Dolly Parton made from pieces of cloth, portraits of Ellen DeGeneres and Oprah Winfrey made with coffee beans and a sculpture of baseball star Hank Aaron made with chocolates and chocolate wrappers. His most successful work—on view at The Louisville Slugger Museum in Louisville, Kentucky—is a portrait of actress Jennifer Lawrence, made with 10,000 peanuts. It was the museum’s most-photographed item in 2016.

Blanco’s formal training in fine art began in Medellin, Colombia, where he studied under the direction of Débora Arango Pérez, the venerable painter, ceramicist and graphic artist known for her politically charged portrayals of nude female figures challenging Catholic values who was immortalized on the country’s 2,000 peso bill. He also studied with Arturo Estrada Hernández, the Mexican painter known for his mural work as well as his membership in “Los Fridos,” a group of Frida Kahlo’s students, and Lola Vélez, recognized as one of Diego Rivera’s favorite students and considered the first female muralist of Colombia. Additional studies include goldsmithing and jewelry in Medellin, Colombia, and a B.A. from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida.

Original works by Mateo Blanco can be found in locations throughout the world including Cape Town, South Africa; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Queensland, Australia; Miami, Key West, Panama City and Orlando, Florida; Gatlinburg, Tennessee; Prince Edward Island and Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada; Bogota, Colombia; Mexico City, Mexico; and New York.

Biographical Information

1981 Born; Miami, Florida

Selected Exhibitions

- 2014 Ripley’s Believe It or Not! Museum; Orlando, Florida
Ripley’s Believe It or Not! Museum; New York
- 2015 The Louisville Slugger Museum; Louisville, Kentucky
- 2016 Disney Springs Resort; Orlando, Florida
- 2017 *Mateo Blanco*, The Virginia Miller Gallery; Miami, Florida
- 2018 Aloft Orlando Downtown; Orlando, Florida
The Memphis Zoo; Memphis, Tennessee
Wafi Mall; Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- 2019 *Rusty Batman*, Tampa International Airport; Tampa Bay, Florida
Orlando Museum of Art; Orlando, Florida

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Selected Exhibitions (continued)

- 2020 Janes' Art Center; New Smyrna Beach, Florida
- 2021 Gallery Biba; Palm Beach, Florida
- 2022 Duque Arango Contemporáneo Gallery; Medellin, Colombia

Public and Private Collections

George H. W. Bush
Francia Escobar
Diego & Gisela Lowenstein
The Ritz Carlton; South Beach, Florida
Jim Pattison
The Jim Pattison Group
Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum, multiple locations
The Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory
STK Orlando
The ONE Group
Disney Springs
The Walt Disney Company
PepsiCo, Inc.
FedEx Corporation
Domenico Maurici
Itay Moalem
Dr. Esther Pichardo & Dr. Angel De Los Reyes
Francia Escobar de Zárata Art Collection
Lucy Doughty Art Collection

Selected Publications

- 2018 *Odd is Art*. Ripley's Believe It or Not!
- 2019 Meyer, Edward. *Buying the Bizarre: Confessions of a Compulsive Collector*.
- 2021 *Caged Bird* (film about Mateo Blanco), Fusion Fest; Orlando, Florida