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Robert Fishko, *Director*

For Immediate Release

RANCE JONES

La Vida Brava – Cuba Today

April 27 – June 9, 2023



Calling, 2021, watercolor on paper, 32 x 25 inches

New York, NY – Forum Gallery is delighted to announce the second one-person exhibition for American watercolorist **Rance Jones** (b. 1965) at the gallery. The exhibition, ***La Vida Brava – Cuba Today***, will open on April 27, 2023, continuing through June 9, 2023. Jones, who lives in Richardson, Texas, first visited Cuba in 2018 and was immediately inspired to begin his paintings of the current reality of life there. Jones has subsequently made two more trips to Cuba, each time traveling to small towns around the island-nation where the Artist takes time to learn about the lives of its inhabitants, talking to locals and absorbing their world through the music, commerce, dance, thought and history that informs their daily lives.

For this exhibition, *La Vida Brava – Cuba Today*, Jones has created nearly thirty new watercolors that explore children, farmers, workers, shoppers and tradespeople against the fascinating past/present landscape that is Cuba today. From within the vistas of rich contrast described in the works emerges Jones' common theme in his art - human life, and the persistent hope, ambition and devotion that inspire the lives of the Cuban people. A mother patiently ties the

shoelaces of her young son on the front porch of their brightly colored town home; a young professional couple, both doctors, share a bicycle along cobblestone streets bordered by a dilapidated building showing the remnants of its once brightly painted walls; a young barefoot woman tends her fruit stall; and a young boy proudly displays his bird, a treasured Cuban pet, at home in its cage. All are painted with the meticulous technical ability and knowing sense of color that enable Jones' talent for revealing human emotion to emerge.

About his most recent trip to Cuba when the Covid-19 pandemic was a significant concern, Jones writes:

“...I wasn’t sure how I would capture facial expressions and emotion hidden behind a veil of face masks. Cubans are outgoing and gregarious people...It was painful not to see the endearing smiles of children as they walked to school, and a struggle to hear the aging voice of Luis Martinez, Trinidad’s beloved poet muffled behind a frayed cloth mask.

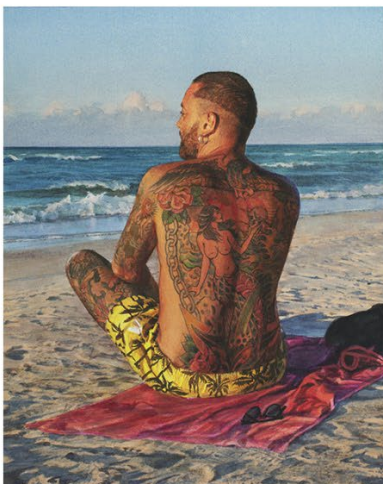
My plan for this trip was to slow down my pace and when possible, allow each exchange to open the door to friendship and trust. It turned out to be one of the best experiences I could have hoped for. I learned more about my friends in Cuba than I ever would have if it had not been for the cumbersome nature of this remarkable time in history. It was “un regalo”, a gift. Each person I captured in photos was a testament to the resilience and courage that is so prevalent there.”

Born in Lubbock, Texas, Rance Jones moved to New York City in 1991 to attend the School of Visual Arts and pursue an MFA degree in Illustration. After a decade of work for publications including *The New York Times* and *National Review*, Jones moved back to Texas to concentrate on his own artistic endeavors. Jones’ watercolors have been regularly presented since 2010 in both solo and group exhibitions at galleries and institutions across the United States and in England. Rance Jones’ work is represented in private collections across the country. He has won awards from over 14 organizations including American Artist Professional League, American Art Collector, Arte de Los Brazos, The Huntington Art Prize, the National Watercolor Society, and Western Federation of Watercolor Societies.

The exhibition will open to the public on Thursday, April 27th. We invite you to a “meet and greet” with the Artist on Saturday, April 29th from 11am to 4pm at the gallery.

You are invited to explore our Online Viewing Room for ***Rance Jones: La Vida Brava – Cuba Today*** here:

<https://viewingroom.forumgallery.com/viewing-room/rance-jones-la-vida-brava-cuba-today>



Siren Tattoo, 2021, watercolor on paper, 12 ½ x 10 inches



Close to the Heart, 2022, watercolor on paper, 12 ½ x 10 inches



Fumando, 2022, watercolor on paper, 21 x 17 inches

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Forum Gallery is located at 475 Park Avenue at 57th Street, New York, NY 10022. Forum Gallery is open to the public from Monday through Saturday, from 10am to 5:30pm. Please visit <https://viewingroom.forumgallery.com/viewing-room/rance-jones-la-vida-brava-cuba-today> to view the entire exhibition online. The exhibition begins on April 27, 2023, and will be on view through June 9, 2023. A 36-page full-color catalogue accompanies the exhibition.