

PUBLIC
ART
FUND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MARTINE GUTIERREZ DEBUTS
TEN SELF-PORTRAITS AS LEGENDARY HISTORICAL FIGURES
FOR MULTI-CITY PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
IN NEW YORK CITY, CHICAGO, AND BOSTON**



Martine Gutierrez: ANTI-ICON
JCDecaux Bus Shelters
Citywide: New York, NY; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA
August 25—November 21, 2021

August 25, 2021, NEW YORK, NY— Today, Public Art Fund unveils *ANTI-ICON*, a 300-site exhibition of ten new photographs by Brooklyn-based photographer and performance artist Martine Gutierrez. The exhibition is now on view on 100 JCDecaux bus shelters across New York City, 150 in Chicago, and for the first time in this exhibition series, 50 JCDecaux bus shelters in Boston. With *ANTI-ICON*, Gutierrez continues her exploration of identity across the landscapes of race, gender, class, and culture. Through the ten black and white and color photographs, the artist embodies the spirit of historical and mythological women who have achieved iconic status across cultures, over many centuries, in both art history and popular culture. Gutierrez is the sole performer in the series, and through the use of simple props, wigs, makeup, disguises, and natural elements, she represents ten icons: Aphrodite, Atargatis, Cleopatra, Queen Elizabeth I, Gabriel, Lady Godiva, Helen of Troy, Judith, Mulan, and the Queen of Sheba. Framing them as “anti-icons,” Gutierrez reinvents the conventional modes of

their representation, while acknowledging their powerful idealized and legendary status. Inspired by and presented on traditional advertising spaces across the three cities, the exhibition can be encountered on a walk or daily commute throughout the duration of the exhibition. ***ANTI-ICON*** is Gutierrez's first institutional solo show in New York and is on view from August 25 to November 21, 2021 on JCDecaux bus shelters across New York City, Chicago, and Boston.

"ANTI-ICON presents ten legendary figures from history and myth who transcended sexist stereotypes to become recognized as powerful, be they rulers, warriors, leaders, or figures of worship," says **Public Art Fund Associate Curator Katerina Stathopoulou**. "An image-magician, Gutierrez uses a DIY aesthetic—deploying simple, everyday props—and merges it with the stylized language of advertising to reimagine these icons, evoking a sense of possibility and reinvention."

Transforming herself into a multitude of roles, the artist has interpreted a diverse canon of radical historical figures: **Aphrodite**, ancient Greek goddess of love and beauty; **Atargatis**, Syrian goddess of fertility; **Cleopatra**, Egyptian ruler famed for her influence on Roman politics; **Queen Elizabeth I**, 16th century Queen of England; **Gabriel**, archangel who appears in Abrahamic religions; **Lady Godiva**, bold noblewoman from the Medieval period who fought for justice for everyday people; **Helen of Troy**, Greek beauty seen as the cause of the Trojan war; **Judith**, courageous biblical widow who used her charm to bring down an Assyrian general; **Mulan**, Chinese warrior folk heroine; **Queen of Sheba**, Arabian queen from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim texts known for her wit, power, and wealth. Each is renowned for their resilience, leadership, courage, and influence. For Gutierrez, they are powerful figures across cultures, as well as role models for the LGBTQ+ community, with which she identifies.

"Neither celebrity nor darling, but a symbol martyred. ANTI-ICON—the radical ethos of femininity, challenging history through her strength, perseverance and beauty. Beauty we covet and fear, censor and mourn, envy and punish," says **artist Martine Gutierrez**.

Gutierrez created the ten artworks in *ANTI-ICON* just as the COVID-19 pandemic began, working outdoors in a makeshift studio in Upstate New York during the summer of 2020 and spring of 2021. There, she drew inspiration from her natural surroundings and the physical materials to which she had access. Bark, flowers, airy fabrics, feathers, plaster, paint, string, cardboard, and tarps act as props and costumes that transform, armor, and disguise her. Through each metamorphosis, Gutierrez explores the power inherent in the visual representations and symbols that surround us. By embodying and reimagining these icons on bus shelters, she offers a new and unconventional perspective on both identity and cultural representation.

Martine Gutierrez: ANTI-ICON is curated by Public Art Fund Associate Curator Katerina Stathopoulou.

@PublicArtFund #ANTI_ICON

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Martine Gutierrez (b.1989) is an artist, performer, writer and musician who constructs elaborate narrative scenes to subvert pop cultural tropes in the exploration of identity, both personal and collective intersectional to race, gender, class, indigeneity and culture. Her amass of media—ranging from billboards and episodic films to music videos and renowned magazine, *Indigenous Woman*—produce the very conduits of advertising that sell the identities she disassembles. Gutierrez hybridizes the industry's objectification of sex with the individual's pursuit of self, satirically undermining the aesthetics of what we know. While she manufactures 'celebrity' to pass as multinational corporations, it is Gutierrez herself who executes every role—simultaneously acting as subject, artist and muse.

Gutierrez received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2012. She is also a published musician and has produced several commercial videos. Gutierrez lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

VISITING THE EXHIBITION

To learn more about the exhibition and view exhibition maps, visit PublicArtFund.org/Martine-Gutierrez.

Location: JCDecaux bus shelters in New York, NY (100 locations across all five boroughs); Chicago, IL (150 locations citywide); and Boston, MA (50 locations citywide)

Dates: August 25—November 21, 2021

Public Art Fund exhibitions are always free and open to the public. We encourage you to be mindful of social distancing protocols when visiting the artworks.

Additional artworks by Gutierrez are currently on view at the [Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College](https://MuseumofContemporaryPhotographyatColumbiaCollege.org) through August 29, 2021. Martine Gutierrez presents a selection from her publication and body of work *Indigenous Woman* (2018).

SUPPORT

Leadership support for ANTI-ICON is provided by Jennifer & Matthew Harris with additional support from the Daniel and Estrellita Brodsky Family Foundation, Les Christoffel & Paul Greene, Steve Corkin & Dan Maddalena, Ryan Lee Gallery, Kathleen McDonough & Edward Berman, and Linda R. & Andrew Safran.

ANTI-ICON is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Public Art Fund gratefully acknowledges the partnership of JCDecaux.

Cultured is the official magazine partner of ANTI-ICON.

Public Art Fund is supported by the generosity of individuals, corporations, and private foundations including major support from Abrams Foundation, the Charina Endowment Fund, the Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, The Fuhrman Family Foundation, The Marc Haas Foundation, Hartfield Foundation, William Talbott Hillman Foundation-Affirmation Arts Fund, the Donald A. Pels Charitable Trust, Red Crane Foundation, and The Silverweed Foundation.

Public Art Fund exhibitions are also supported in part with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



Council on
the Arts



CULTURED

ABOUT PUBLIC ART FUND

As the leader in its field, Public Art Fund brings dynamic contemporary art to a broad audience in New York City and beyond by mounting ambitious free exhibitions of international scope and impact that offer the public powerful experiences with art and the urban environment.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Grace Halio | ghalio@publicartfund.org

Allegra Thoresen | athoresen@publicartfund.org

Image captions:

Martine Gutierrez, *ANTI-ICON, Cleopatra*, 2021, New York City

Courtesy the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, NY

Photo: Nicholas Knight, Courtesy of Public Art Fund, NY.

Photographic work as a part of *Martine Gutierrez: ANTI-ICON*, an exhibition on 300 JCDecaux bus shelters displayed across New York City, Chicago, and Boston, August 25 to November, 21 2021.