



January 23, 2019

HITN was present at Repatriation: A Cultural Exchange Project

San Juan, Puerto Rico; January 22, 2019 – HITN President and CEO Michael D. Nieves, and L. Alejandro Molina, Executive Assistant to the CEO, were present at the opening reception of Repatriation: A cultural exchange project between Chicago and Puerto Rico from January 25, 2019, in the Bertita and Guillermo L. Martínez Gallery at The Museum of Art of Puerto Rico (MAPR). Nieves is a Board Member of the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture (NMPRAC) in Chicago, which co-sponsored the exhibit with MAPR.

During the reception Nieves stated, “This reception is an honor for us. The Hispanic Information Telecommunications Network (HITN) is in 44 million households and is committed to creating bonds of unity between Latinos of all backgrounds and countries.”

Nieves continued, “As the largest commercial-free Hispanic network in the United States, we consider our community to be where Latinos are. In Puerto Rico, we donated water filters to provide clean water to residents affected by the flooding and mass destruction of Hurricane Maria. In the Brooklyn Navy Yard, we led the campaign to collect a record-breaking number of coats this holiday season. We lent a helping hand to Parada Tres Reyes Magos de Brooklyn, offering Latino Brooklynites an opportunity to celebrate our rich culture and Nuestra Herencia. We forged a new pre-school educational technology partnership with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center Juan Antonio Corretjer's childcare and Centro Infantil Consuelo Lee Corretjer in Chicago by donating and conducting staff training for 100+ iPads with over 20 pre-installed children's bi-lingual, math and other STEM-based apps. Moreover, we continued to offer new, smart content through our channel across the country. As always, HITN is ready to serve and help empower our communities.”

“Repatriation presents a condensed selection of artists from Puerto Rico based in Chicago, who reside in the city or recently moved from it. It is also the product of the effort and dedication of our friend, Billy Ocasio, director of the NMPRAC, an institution that stands out for highlighting the best of our culture and our values. We are very excited to present the fruits of this valuable partnership for the benefit of the Puerto Rican arts and Puerto Rican artists,” said Marta Mabel Pérez, executive director of the MAPR.

For his part, Billy Ocasio, director of the NMPRAC, added; “Repatriation opens a world of dialogue between the communities of the United States and those of Puerto Rico, helping us to fulfill our national responsibility as a principal organization that influences and connects the arts, culture, and history of the diaspora with the developing generations. We are sending the message that we must support each other, especially after the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. We are honored and proud to partner with a great institution such as the MAPR and its Executive Director, Marta Mabel Pérez.”

Repatriation was born of a group of artists who mostly belong to the first generation of the second great migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States, in this case, Chicago. Bibiana Suárez, Cándida Álvarez, Edra Soto, Javier Bosques, José Lerma, Josué Pellot, Luis Rodríguez Rosario, Nora Maité Nieves, Omar Velázquez and Oscar Luis Martínez make up the group of artists that are part of this exhibition. The objective is to highlight the contemporary Puerto Rican artists' practice from Chicago in Puerto Rico to open new artistic dialogues between both communities.

“Repatriation cannot be conceived without a diaspora. At present, the word ‘diaspora’ has acquired a general meaning in reference to the forced relocation of people outside their country of origin to foreign countries. A crucial aspect of the diaspora is the desire to return and to recreate the lost homeland. It is this yearning that is at the core of the concept of ‘diaspora.’ The diaspora is deeply rooted in the homeland, even if one stays away from it. Repatriation, therefore, is the return of someone to their own country. It is also the return of art or cultural heritage to their country of origin,” said Bianca Ortiz Declat, curator of the exhibition.