

LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FRANCISCO MASÓ: *Documentary Abstraction*

June 14 – July 19, 2025

Opening Reception:

Saturday, June 14, 4–7 p.m.

Media Contact:

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Luis De Jesus Los Angeles is pleased to present ***Francisco Masó: Documentary Abstraction***, the Cuban conceptual artist's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles. The exhibition runs June 14 through July 19, 2025, with an opening reception on Saturday, June 14 from 4–7 p.m.

Francisco Masó: Documentary Abstraction brings together new works from Masó's ongoing series *Aesthetic Register of Covert Forces*. The series establishes a catalog and archive of acrylic on canvas paintings which serves as an abstract geometric guide for identifying the forces of power within a state control apparatus while simultaneously generating discourse on the militarization of Cuban civil society.

The development of *Aesthetic Register of Covert Forces* started with Masó's search for information about protests against the Cuban government. Through his ongoing research of documentary photographs found on the dark web capturing scenes of repression in Cuba where political forces confront civil resistance groups, Masó has identified recurring linear color patterns in the clothing worn by the secret police. These garments are striped polo shirts imported by the Cuban government and distributed among various law enforcement institutions to their political officers as a work incentive. Their use is inconspicuous, creating a subtle yet unconscious distinction between those who wear them and those who do not. Masó replicates and reimagines these exact polo shirt patterns in paint, transforming their colors and stripes into recognizable symbols. Masó's paintings of textiles amplify records of a different pattern—a pattern of openly vigilant, oppressive behaviors—and effectively shifts the power dynamics through exposure and visibility of such patterns. Consequently, Masó's photo-investigative approach can be regarded as a form of counterintelligence.

Documentary Abstraction contextualizes Masó's practice within the broader history of abstraction while highlighting through photography its intersection with political agency. The exhibition unfolds through a dynamic display across interconnected key moments, each offering a distinct entry point into the artist's investigation of power, surveillance, and systemic violence. The paintings in *Aesthetic Register of Covert Forces* can be placed within a lineage of modern Latin American geometric abstraction and abstraction produced by 20th century artists such as Josef Albers, Blinky Palermo, Agnes Martin, and Rosemarie Trockel—artists who employ a critical lens to disrupt power dynamics. In the same way that Albers observes and studies colors, Masó examines photos made by bystanders and anti-government forces—records of political protest, of different gatherings and meetings—and perceives a certain repetition that stands out, even if it is barely perceptible in the visible field.

Francisco Masó (b. 1988, Havana, Cuba) is an AfroLatinx artist living and working in Miami. He received a Bachelor's degree in Stage Design from the Instituto Superior de Arte, Havana (2014). He also graduated from both Behavior Art School (2009), led by Tania Bruguera, and the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts (2007). Recent solo exhibitions include *Who Kills Ai Weiwei?* at Dimensions Variable, Miami, FL (2022), and *Where's Your Favorite Place for Political Art at Home?* at Locust Projects, Miami, FL (2021), and Dimensions Variable, Miami, FL (2020). Selected group exhibitions include *Counter/Surveillance: Control, Privacy, Agency*

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at The Wende Museum, Culver City, CA (2024-2025), *Our Sway* at Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL (2025), *Movements Toward Freedom* at MCA Denver, CO (2024), *You Belong Here: Place, People, and Purpose in Latinx Photography* at Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Sarasota, FL (2024), *Paint the Protest* at Off Paradise, New York, NY, organized by Nancy Spector, and *Time for Change: Art and Social Unrest in the Jorge M. Pérez Collection* at El Espacio 23, Miami, FL (2019). He has participated in residencies at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (2024), the Hayama Artist Residency (2022), the Anderson Ranch Arts Center (2022), and Artist in Residence in the Everglades (2022), and the Oolite Arts' Home + Away Residency at Atlantic Center for the Arts (2020). Maso is a 2022 and 2020 Ellies Creator Award winner by Oolite Arts, a 2021 South Florida Cultural Consortium grant recipient, and a 2022 DV—AIRIE Award winner.

For further information, including images and preview, please call 213-395-0762, or email: gallery@luisdejesus.com.