



#### About Joseriberto Perez

Joseriberto was born in Newark, New Jersey, and has lived between Chicago and Miami for the last 15 years. He received his BFA (2007) and MFA (2017) from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he has also taught courses in the Department of Fiber and Material Studies. In 2014 Joseriberto was awarded the Cannonball local artist in residency for the year. He has participated in various solo and group exhibitions including at Shane Campbell Gallery, University Galleries at Florida Atlantic University, Devening Projects, and Hyde Park Art Center. Joseriberto is a recipient of the prestigious South Florida Cultural Consortium Grant.

## Joseriberto: BoboDeco

October 15, 2022 – February 11, 2023  
Gallery 5



Detail of *Shore Line*, 2021-2022, silkscreen dye transfer monoprint and acrylic on canvas and dyed cotton, 67 x 137 inches

## Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

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Dyeing, folding, sewing, pressing, and washing are all familiar to artist Joseriberto Perez's artistic process and to the labor performed by his family members, who worked as laundromat operators during much of his youth. His process also involves printing, painting, layering, sewing, and collaging using materials like linen, cotton, polyester, or silk. Over the last decade, Joseriberto has produced a stockpile of hand-dyed and printed fabrics with brilliantly colored foliage prints and patterns. His studio hosts bundles of hand-printed fabric folded and stacked on studio shelves, a record of his prolific production. Joseriberto often sews his hand-printed textiles into large-scale, brightly colored compositions. The familiar movements with which the artist creates become material explorations through which he questions art world value systems, particularly in relation to the history of Modern painting.

The title of the exhibition, which was chosen by the artist is a made-up term that combines the words 'bobo,' a colloquial word that translates loosely to fool or silly, and 'deco,' short for Art Deco, the style of design that became popular in the 1920s and 1930s in the United States and is characterized by bold lines and geometric forms. Joseriberto's use of the word bobo is a provocation that calls attention to how mainstream art history has traditionally characterized artworks by non-Western artists to be less intellectually rigorous than that of their Western counterparts. The second part of the title is also short for 'decorative,' a word used to dismiss abstract paintings that are perceived to have little conceptual value. By calling his work bobo, Joseriberto identifies with the Other (with non-Western artists).



*Bruma*, 2020, acrylic and dye transfer monoprint on dyed cotton, 67 x 49 inches

Joseriberto's approach to printmaking is improvisational. Joseriberto uses mesh screens, which are conventionally intended to create multiples in order to make single prints or monoprints. Instead of burning images onto a screen to then print them repeatedly, Joseriberto often paints on screens (ones that have not been blocked with emulsion) and then forcefully transfers the ink onto the fabric using a squeegee. This was the case in *Bruma* (2022), where he printed three distinct images several times while the screen was flooded with varying amounts of ink. Each image appears three times, each with varying opacity levels. As a result, his patterns have various moments of interrupted continuity.

As a graduate from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's MFA program,

Joseriberto studied the reductionist aesthetic of Modernist painting from the early 20th Century through the Art Institute of Chicago's collection. He not only studied this particular chapter in the history of painting, he also mastered its language. In his paintings, elements like line, pattern, and repetition of simple forms are combined with painterly representations of foliage and architectural patterns found in his hometown of Miami. Joseriberto's paintings often include depictions of palm fronds, decorative fences, and quiebrasoles (sun breakers). He often paints on screens and prints his images onto fabric, to create mediated paintings. This process allows him to reproduce the fluidity of painting without sacrificing the flatness that can be achieved through print-making. The result is a different kind of Modern painting, one that appropriates the visual language of Modernist painting, which prioritizes flatness and non-representation, to critique its position of superiority in Western art history.

The Indian-British scholar Homi Bhabha devised the concept of colonial mimicry. He explained, "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is the same, but not quite." Bhabha explains, "in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference." He adds, "mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal." According to Bhabha, it is through mimicry and ambivalence (slippage) that the colonized can subvert the colonizer. Bhabha suggests that through imitation, the colonized subject may realize the fragility of oppressive power systems. Bhabha's concept of colonial mimicry resonates with my interpretation of Joseriberto's work and what I see as its capacity to operate as a criticism of Western art history, while simultaneously imitating it. By making work that mimics the visual language of Modern painting but slips and shows its difference, Joseriberto seeks to challenge the superiority of Modern painting in history or art.

In Joseriberto's work, one of the ways in which the slippage and difference becomes apparent is through the inclusion of printed images of objects and architectural features found in Caribbean family homes and neighborhoods. His painting, *Shoreline*, includes a print of a decorative fringe on a table runner, the type that is common in family homes. Diamond-shaped window grilles, which are often present in Miami neighborhoods are featured in his work in various colors and sizes. These objects and many others become tangible symbols of Otherness or non-whiteness in both communities of color and Joseriberto's paintings.

Mariela Acuna  
Exhibitions and Residency Manager

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(1) Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 85.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) *ibid.*