GRAY

875 N Michigan Ave, Ste 3800
Chicago, IL 60611
+1 312 642 8877

1018 Madison Ave, 2nd Fl
New York, NY 10075
+1 212 472 8787

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CANDIDA ALVAREZ JOINS GRAY

GRAY is thrilled to welcome Candida Alvarez to the gallery's roster of artists. With a practice spanning over five decades, Alvarez has developed a unique visual language that moves freely between abstraction and representation. Throughout her many series and bodies of work Alvarez has defied the rules of material, form, and even identity. Regarded as one of her generation's most compelling artists, her work has gained larger cultural recognition in recent years. Alvarez's first solo exhibition with GRAY will open in Fall 2027.

GRAY will represent Alvarez in New York in collaboration with Monique Meloche, who will continue to represent her in Chicago. "Candida Alvarez had been a good friend to the gallery and part of our community for years," says Valerie Carberry, CEO and president of GRAY. "To officially welcome her to the gallery feels like the natural next step, especially at this time of acclaim and celebration in her career. It is no small feat to push abstraction to new places and Alvarez does it with rigor and joy." As Candida Alvarez says, "It is truly a delight and honor to be invited to join a gallery with a solid 60-year history of representing serious artists whose passion, commitment, and risk-taking has been an endless source of inspiration to me."

Alvarez's charcoal drawings, diptychs, polyptychs, and sculptural installations are deeply rooted in close observation and the alchemy of color, with a focus on weaving discrete units of information into mysterious compositions. Her economical gestures, boldness of palettes, and conceptual approaches to painting were impacted by relationships to some of contemporary art's most towering forces, including Jack Whitten, Mel Bochner, Sol Lewitt, and David Hammons. A dancer of mambo and cha-cha, Alvarez's works have a choreographed quality, one that balances spontaneity and structure and refuses strict interpretations.

With a vocabulary including roofing nails, nylon twine, PVC mesh, and aluminum, Alvarez takes a bilingual approach to material and medium. Through methods like stacking and stretching—and a long engagement with printmaking, drawing, and photography—she has pushed painting and sculpture into new domains. Drawing from art history, memory, and most importantly, her lived experience, Alvarez's approach to abstraction as a form of storytelling challenges the pigeonholing of Latine artists as such. Her work probes the connections of everyday life to explore not only Puerto Ricanness and diasporic experience, but what it means to be human and an artist.

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ABOUT CANDIDA ALVAREZ

Candida Alvarez (b. 1955, Brooklyn, New York) grew up in the Farragut public housing project to Puerto Rican immigrant parents. She cites her experiences of looking out the 14th-floor window of her Brooklyn apartment as crucial to her understanding of art. After graduating in 1977 with her BA from Fordham, where she was mentored by Jack Whitten, Alvarez took classes at El Museo Del Barrio, participated in Bob Blackburn's workshop, and studied at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. In the early 1980s, she worked in a studio as part of the International Studio and Workspace Program at PS1 Contemporary Art Center (now MoMA PS1). She also participated in the foundational artist-in-residence program at the Studio Museum in Harlem and the CETA-funded Cultural Council Foundation Artists Project. In the 1980s and early '90s, her work was included in exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum, Studio Museum in Harlem, Queens Museum, and MoMA PS1. In 1997, she received her MFA from Yale School of Painting, where she studied with Richard Lytle, Frances Barth, Robert Reed, and Mel Bochner, among others.

Alvarez gained greater attention in 2017 with her first major institutional exhibition at the Chicago Cultural Center. Her work is collected by the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY; LUMA Foundation, Arles, FR; Mellon Foundation, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; The Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA; The Brandywine Workshop, Philadelphia, PA; The Printmaking Workshop, New York, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; The University of Delaware, Newark, DE; University of Michigan Lending Collection, Ann Arbor, MI; The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA, and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY. She held the F.H. Sellers Professorship in Painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she is now Professor Emerit, and in Fall 2024, Alvarez was the Alex Katz Chair in Painting at The Cooper Union. In 2025, her first institutional survey exhibition, titled *Circle, Point, Hoop*, was held at El Museo del Barrio. Alvarez's first exhibition with GRAY, held in 2025, was *Real Monsters in Bold Colors: Bob Thompson and Candida Alvarez*.