



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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VIBERATIONS OF PASAQUAN COMES TO THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

Exhibition Features Works by St. EOM, Eddie Dominguez and Martha Clippinger

[For Release Aug 14, 2020 – Albany, GA]— The enigmatic Eddie Owens Martin, who left his South Georgia sharecropper home as a teen to chase a flamboyant lifestyle in New York City before returning home to found Pasaquan, has inspired artists for decades. Now, works by the famed outsider artist and two artists he influenced—Eddie Domignuez and Martha Clippinger—are on view at the Albany Museum of Art in the exhibition *Viberations of Pasaquan*.

The exhibition continues through Oct 24, 2020, in the West Gallery of the AMA. Also featured at the AMA are *JUAN LOGAN: creating & collecting*, which includes works by North Carolina artist Juan Logan as well as works that he has collected, in the Haley Gallery, and *Works by Brian Willmont*, featuring works by the Brooklyn, N.Y., artist, in the East Gallery. The AMA is open 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and 10 am-7 pm Thursdays. Admission is free.

The very name of the exhibition—*Viberations*—is based one of the terms coined by Martin, who changed his name to St. EOM (pronounced Ohm) when he became the lone practitioner of Pasaquoyanism following a vision he had in New York while he was suffering from a mysterious, never-diagnosed illness.

Viberations were what Martin would often say he wanted viewers of his work to experience, deep feelings evoked by the visual stimulations from seeing a work of art. They are described as internal vibrations, like tremors in the body, that produce quivering sensations in the arms, legs, chest or abdomen. When viewers feel viberations, they become connected to the optical frequencies present in the artwork.

Martin was 14 when he hitchhiked from Buena Vista, Ga., to New York City in 1922, supporting himself as a hustler, fortune teller, gay nightclub waiter, bartender, drag queen and gambler. In 1935, he felt he was near death from an illness when he was visited by an apparition that told him he was “gonna be the start of somethin’ new” and to rename himself St. EOM.

Martin was among the many colorful street characters of New York for the next two decades, focusing more on fortune-telling than hustling as he aged. In 1957, after his mother died in Georgia, he returned to the farmhouse in Buena Vista and—clad in bright robes and feathered headdresses—began telling fortunes for pay. He used the money he earned from his divinations to create Pasaquan on the seven-acre site. He built six major structures, mandala murals and 900 feet of painted masonry wall, fusing African, pre-Columbian Mexico and Native American cultural and religious symbols in his work. St. EOM continued at Pasaquan until 1986, when he fatally shot himself after several years of declining health.

For nearly three decades, the Pasaquan Preservation Society struggled to preserve the art environment, which was brought back to a healthy life after the organization partnered with the Kohler Foundation and Columbus State University.

Two artists who visited Pasaquan and felt the vibrations were Dominguez, a tenured art professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Martha Clippinger, a Durham, N.C., artist who grew up near Pasaquan in Columbus. Ceramic artworks by Dominguez and quilts by Clippinger are on exhibition in *Vibrations of Pasaquan* in the AMA's West gallery alongside ceramic work, a sculpture and drawings by St. EOM.

"When I went to Pasaquan, I didn't know what to expect," Dominguez said. "What I discovered was more than I could imagine. To see an artist whose work was so honest and sincere to his vision was moving. I have always been influenced by these kinds of artists, the outsider. Seeing Pasaquan, feeling it and being a part of it was special. As I stood in the middle of that amazing place, I was possessed by the energy and vision of St. EOM's creations."

One of the leaders in contemporary ceramic and multimedia art in the United States, Dominguez said that when he was growing up in New Mexico, he was interested in roadside memorials, religious icons on people's houses, and the religious iconography on the bodies of people who were struggling with life, such as prisoners and troubled youth. He noted that his own back injury a dozen years ago has left him in constant pain that he filters while confronting issues such as aging, frailty, physical disability, trauma and loss.

"I explore all of this through these torso forms," he said. "At the same time, I continue my passion for the earth in my attachment to the process of creating permanent objects of beauty out of clay. My use of color has been informed and inspired by contemporary painting as much as the amazing light on the color of the land around us."

Clippinger grew up a little over 30 miles from Pasaquan, which she first visited as a child. That visit, she said, "ignited a love of color and pattern that continues to this day."

"Beginning in high school, the symbols and motifs of its designs sparked a curiosity to learn more about non-Western cultures," Clippinger said. "St. EOM produced a unique hybrid of cultures, creating an iconography that is at once personal and universal. Pasaquan demonstrated the wonderful potential for creating art beyond the canvas and provided an endlessly inspiring model through its full-fledged integration of art and life."

In 2014, Clippinger began a collaboration with weavers Licha Gonzales Ruiz and Agustin Contreras Lopez, of Teotitlan del Valle, Oaxaca, Mexico, to create tapetes using yarns hand-dyed by her partners.

"The construction of the quilts is much more improvisatory than the tapetes, which I design but do not weave," Clippinger said. "The resulting compositions present rhythmic geometric arrangements of

varied colors, textures, and patterns where the fabrics' origins contribute to narratives and histories behind each quilt.

"Anni Albers's discussion of the 'pliable plane' and the relationship of textiles to architecture inspires these works. That they may function as floor or bed coverings, or as wall hangings creates an open-endedness that I love. I enjoy seeing my work function in both realms, for it blurs the borders and flattens the hierarchies between art and craft."

Clippinger received her MFA from Mason Gross School of Art, Rutgers University, and is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including a 2017 Durham Arts Council Grant in Craft, a 2014 American Academy of Arts and Letters Purchase Award, and a 2013 Fulbright-Garcia Robles research grant completed in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Her work has been featured in *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Burnaway* and *Hyperallergic*. She has had numerous gallery and museum solo exhibitions, including projects at The Columbus Museum in Columbus, Ga., and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art. Her work is in several public collections, including the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Duke University, and The Columbus Museum.

Dominguez received his BFA from the Cleveland Art Institute and continued his education at New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, completing his MFA. He is the recipient of two National Endowment of the Arts grants, many artist residencies, and numerous public art project grants. He has lectured and conducted workshops at over 100 leading institutions across the country.

His work is in public and private collections, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, New Mexico Museum of Art, Sheldon Museum of Art, Albuquerque Museum, Detroit Institute of Arts, and Roswell Museum & Art Center.

CURRENT AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *JUAN LOGAN: creating & collecting* is in the Haley Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.
- *Works by Brian Willmont* is in the East Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.
- *Viberations from Pasaquan* is in the West Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and 10-7 pm Thursdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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