

The Divine Feminine Interventions of Vickie Pierre Assemble Deeper Truths about Race, Colonialism, and Who Gets to be the Princess

Vickie Pierre: Be My Herald of What's to Come

– On View June 9 through September 5 at the Boca Raton Museum of Art–

Like the town crier in a fractured fairy tale, “Be My Herald of What’s to Come” rings in Vickie Pierre’s premiere solo museum show at the Boca Raton Museum of Art. Grounded in the Arts and Crafts movement, her installations have a storybook feel. A fractured fairy tale is, after all, a new twist on an old story, reimagined and restructured for a contemporary sensibility. Just as fractured fairytales can be more subversive than the traditional fables, the playfulness and whimsical flourishes of Pierre’s assemblages are underscored by her pull towards the *beautifully grotesque*. In this new exhibition, her works cast a feminine deity spell within the Museum gallery. In the installation she created in 2020, titled “Black Flowers Blossom (Hanging Tree),” the artist honors the souls of people lost to racial injustice, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and the many others. The exhibition was curated by Kelli Bodle, the Assistant Curator of the Museum, and is on view until September 5. Vickie Pierre has also been commissioned to create two murals for the Museum’s entrance courtyard, as part of the new Sculpture Garden.

“These works proclaim that while we can acknowledge the dark, painful parts of our past, at the same time we can also express hope and light for the future,” says the Miami-based artist Vickie Pierre. Her artworks cling to the romanticized, ornate European-based home décor of her childhood home in Brooklyn. The interior design hearkened back to France as the mother country of Haiti, but one that never really was maternal. “It’s not my history, and isn’t even really my parents’ history. All of those decorative elements I remember growing up with, the European flourishes, rococo, and Victorian, were not even part of their lives when they were in Haiti. That’s the push and pull of it. It’s a fantasy, but it’s a beautiful lie,” says Pierre. “Visually, it’s the best eye candy ever.”

She uses vintage Avon perfume bottles shaped like idealized women in period skirts (but removes the tops of the bottles that are shaped like women’s heads and torsos); flaxen hair from dolls; galleon ships to represent the slave trade; bracelets, cuffs and jewelry — all interconnected by long strands of glittering Goddess beads. The color backdrops are reminiscent of French *toile* fabrics. Batons appear, as sails that have lost their wind. “It feels like when you are watching something decay, but know that something better will take its place,” says Pierre.



I Can't Say No To You (Good Enough), 2014. Resin wall plaques, plastic leaves, Avon glass perfume bottles, wooden shelf sconces and ship bookends, jewelry, and hand-strung beads, mounted on shaped MDF panel, latex paint, and vinyl lettering.



And Though I May Have Lost My Way, All Paths Lead Straight to You, 2013. Plastic wall plaques, porcelain, resin, wooden shelf sconces, Avon glass perfume bottles, silk doll hair, band-strung beads on MDF, latex paint, and vinyl lettering.

“I’ve been collecting these Avon perfume bottles for some time, using them as my muses. They’ve been deconstructed because I take their heads and torsos off. It’s a play on the idea of the Princess — who gets to be the Princess?”



Black Flowers Blossom (Hanging Tree), 2020. Created to honor George Floyd and the souls of victims of racial injustice. Hand-strung glass, plastic, and wood beads; fabric, plastic butterflies, flowers and foliage; glitter, vintage Avon perfume bottles, and wooden ship bookends. Photo by Zachary Balber.

About the Artist

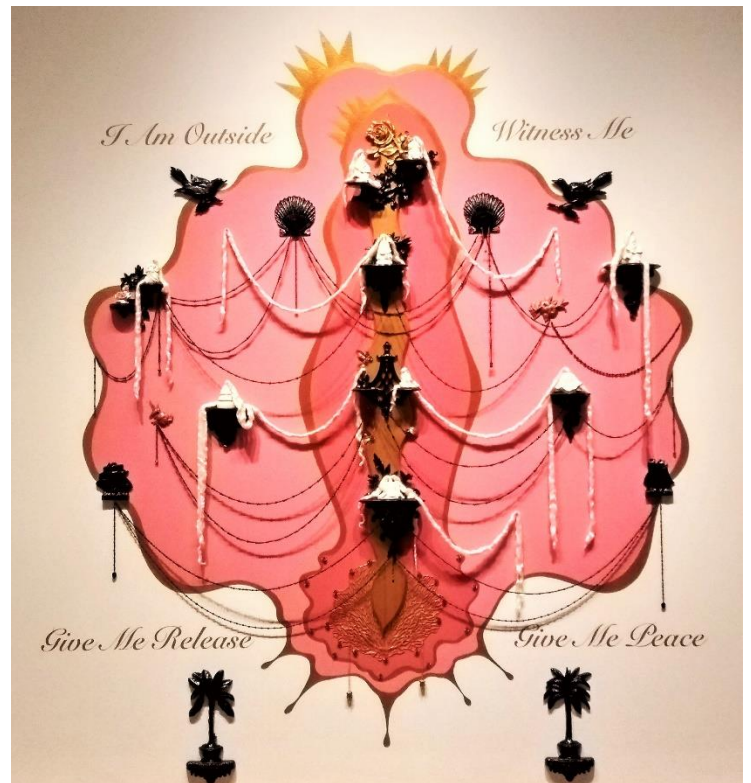
Vickie Pierre is a multimedia artist, born and bred in Brooklyn. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1997. She currently lives in Miami.

Pierre has participated in exhibitions worldwide, including: National Museum of Women in the Arts (D.C.); Miami Art Museum (PAMM); Fredric Snitzer Gallery (Miami); White Box (NY); Musee International des Arts Modestes (France); Museo de Arte Contemporaneo (Puerto Rico); Polk Museum of Art (Lakeland); The King Juan Carlos of Spain I Center (NY); Los Angeles Art Association; Museum of Art and Design (Miami Dade); Little Haiti Cultural Center (Miami); The Deering Estate (Miami); and Locust Projects (Miami), among others. Her artworks can be found in private collections and public institutions.

Vickie Pierre’s creative process is informed and inspired by memory, fantasy, surrealism, popular culture and the decorative and ornamental arts. She is best known for her wall installations that blend elements of her Caribbean heritage with contemporary culture. “There is always a sense of melancholy and longing in my work, it comes from the otherworldly state I put myself in when I am creating,” adds Pierre.

Her exhibition includes, for the first time seen altogether, Pierre’s assemblages and freestanding sculpture that highlight her lyrical brilliance.

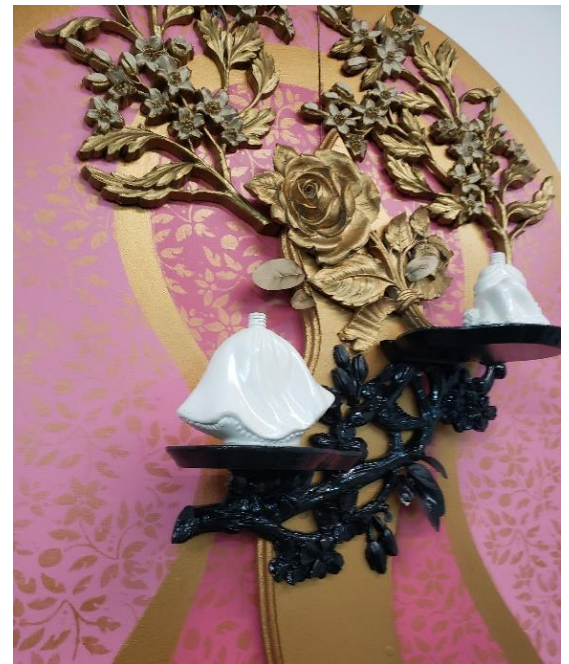
“This exhibition of Vickie Pierre’s assemblages is both a memorial for what has passed and a desire for what is to come,” said Irvin Lippman, the Executive Director of the Museum. “Exploring how people can structure their identity, Pierre pays homage to the French and larger European architectural design that influenced Haitian culture while also subverting it. Her vignettes deal with current issues, revealing deeper truths and fractured identities, but are cloaked in charming tableaux.”



Totems For My Sisters (We Are Illuminous!), 2019. Latex and metallic paint, metal, resin and wood shelf sconces, wooden ship bookends, decorative plastic wall plaques, Avon glass perfume bottles, plastic foliage, jewelry, silk doll hair, hand-strung beads, shaped MDF panel and vinyl lettering.



The inspiration for Pierre’s work has manifested itself in years of collecting diverse materials that often serve as muses in her daily practice and as actual, physical elements within her assemblages and installations. Her continued focus is on the universal themes of identity with references to design and nature, alongside the interconnectivity between her Haitian heritage (including the larger Caribbean community) and global cultural mythologies, while considering feminine and historic tropes that are relative to contemporary cultural politics.



Artwork detail photos on this page by News Travels Fast

About the Boca Raton Museum of Art

Kicking off its eighth decade in 2021, the Boca Raton Museum of Art encompasses a creative campus that includes the Museum in Mizner Park and the Art School. As one of South Florida’s cultural landmarks, the Museum has provided cultural and artistic service to the community, and to many visitors from around the world, since it was founded by artists in 1950. Visit bocamuseum.org/visit/virtual-visits to enjoy the Museum’s current online content, including video tours and digital gallery guides. Support for [#BocaMuseumatHome](https://www.instagram.com/BocaMuseumatHome) and [#KeepKidsSmartwithArt](https://www.instagram.com/KeepKidsSmartwithArt) virtual programming is provided by Art Bridges Foundation and PNC. Museum hours, admission prices and more visitor information available at bocamuseum.org/visit. Media Contacts: Jose Lima and Bill Spring, editorial@newstravelstfast.com, 305-910-7762.