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**Hammer Museum Presents *No Humans Involved*
On view October 10, 2021 – January 9, 2022**



(Los Angeles, CA)— The Hammer Museum at UCLA presents *No Humans Involved*, a group exhibition of works by seven artists and collectives—**Eddie Aparicio, Tau Lewis, Las Nietas de Nonó, Sondra Perry, SANGREE, WangShui, and Wilmer Wilson IV**— whose work interrogates and disrupts Western modes of humanism. Taking its title from a letter written by the cultural theorist Sylvia Wynter in the aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles uprising, “No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to My Colleagues,” the exhibition expands on Wynter’s ideas by highlighting practices that center non-Western knowledge and spiritual practices, challenge the limits of corporeal identity, and consider the nonhuman or antihuman as a point of departure. Organized by Erin Christovale, associate curator, with Vanessa Arizmendi, curatorial assistant, *No Humans Involved* features sculptures, performances, installations, and multimedia works— most newly created for this exhibition. *No Humans Involved* opens on October 10, 2021, with performances by Las Nietas de Nonó and will be accompanied by a series of public programs, screenings, and a digital symposium on the themes of the exhibition and the influential scholarship of Sylvia Wynter.

“*No Humans Involved* challenges us to consider Sylvia Wynter’s important essay anew, questioning what it means to be human and whose humanity is denied and/or acknowledged through the work of seven visionary artists and collectives,” said Ann Philbin, Hammer Museum director. “Supporting the work of practitioners who produce new knowledge and articulate the complexity of our world is a defining characteristic of Hammer exhibitions, and the artists featured in *No Humans Involved* do just that.”

“At its core, *No Humans Involved* is an exhibition that offers insight into a future humanism that breaches our current embodiment of “Man,” which is fraught with identity constructs that continue to oppress people of color and uphold Western imperialism,” said Erin Christovale.

“No Humans Involved” (often abbreviated as NHI) refers to an internal code that was used by the Los Angeles Police Department, usually in relation to cases that disproportionately involved Black and Brown Angelenos who were often identified as sex workers, gang members, or drug traffickers. The code became public knowledge in 1992, shortly after the trial and ultimate acquittal of the four police officers charged with the use of excessive force in the brutal beating of Rodney King. In her open letter, written to her colleagues as a call to action, Wynter argues that academia is partly to blame for this horrific event and

Image caption: Las Nietas de Nonó, *Ilustraciones de la mecánica*, 2016–19 Performance, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, June 28–30, 2019. Photograph © 2019 Paula Court, courtesy of Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

its aftermath, which forever changed the cultural and social landscape of Los Angeles, because academic institutions uphold and disseminate problematic constructs of race, gender, class, sexuality, and other categories that continue to overdetermine lived experience and justify or deny humanity.

The artists featured in *No Humans Involved* hail from diverse geographies across the diasporic Americas, embodying a deep and critical engagement with marginalized histories. **Eddie Aparicio** (United States, b. 1990) uses organic materials used in indigenous practices in Central America to create sculptures and installations that respond to the civil war in El Salvador and the extraction of natural resources from the region. **Tau Lewis** (Canada, b. 1983) incorporates hand sewing, carving, and assemblage to build portraits and consider Black geographies such as the oceans, forests, and the cosmos as generative information centers that have been lost to colonization or erased over time. **SANGREE** (Mexico, b. 1985 and 1986) is an artistic collaboration that combines elements from Mesoamerican arts and culture, esoteric traditions with contemporary aesthetics, and corporate marketing and branding strategies in order to question how cultural objects are classified and systematized. **Wilmer Wilson IV** (United States, b. 1989) sources various archives in order to emphasize the impact of chattel slavery in America often considering the nonhuman or the anti human as a point of departure through various works and durational performances. **Sondra Perry** (United States, b. 1989) uses open-source software, found footage, and digital tools to create avatars and mixed media installations that interrogate how technology can shape or limit representation and identity. **Las Nietas de Nonó** (Puerto Rico, b. 1979 and 1982) is a duo who works at the intersection of performance, ecology, and art activism to bring attention to the socioeconomic and geographic context of the exclusion and eviction of Black communities in Puerto Rico. **WangShui** creates mixed-media installations and video works that highlight queer sensibilities in Chinese spiritualities and architecture.

Eddie Aparicio, Tau Lewis, SANGREE, Sondra Perry, Las Nietas de Nonó, and WangShui created new works for *No Humans Involved*. This is all the artists' first major museum presentation in Los Angeles.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

No Humans Involved is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. Published by DelMonico Books and designed by STUDIO ELLA, this exhibition catalogue features a foreword by Ann Philbin and texts by Erin Christovale, Anthony Bogues, Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, as well as a reprint of Sylvia Wynter's "No Humans Involved." Archival, never before seen 16mm film photos by Michael Cho of April 29, 1992, the first day of uprisings in Los Angeles, are featured throughout the publication.

CREDIT

No Humans Involved is organized by Erin Christovale, associate curator, with Vanessa Arizmendi, curatorial assistant.

Major support of *No Humans Involved* is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. The exhibition is also supported by Joel Lubin, Jeffrey Deitch, and Pamela J. Joyner and Alfred J. Giuffrida.

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum is part of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA, and offers exhibitions and collections that span classic to contemporary art. It holds more than 50,000 works in its collection, including one of the finest collections of works on paper in the nation, the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts. Through a wide-ranging, international exhibition program and the biennial, *Made in L.A.*, the Hammer highlights contemporary art since the 1960s, especially the work of emerging and under recognized artists. The exhibitions, permanent collections, and nearly 300 public programs annually—including film screenings, lectures, symposia, readings, music performances, and workshops for families—are all free to the public.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free, made possible through the generosity of benefactors Erika J. Glazer and Brenda R. Potter. Hours: Thursday–Sunday 11 a.m.–6 p.m., closed Monday–Wednesday. Museum hours are subject to change. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard at Westwood, Los Angeles. Onsite parking \$7 (maximum 3 hours) or \$7 flat rate after 6 p.m. Visit hammer.ucla.edu for details or call 310-443-7000.