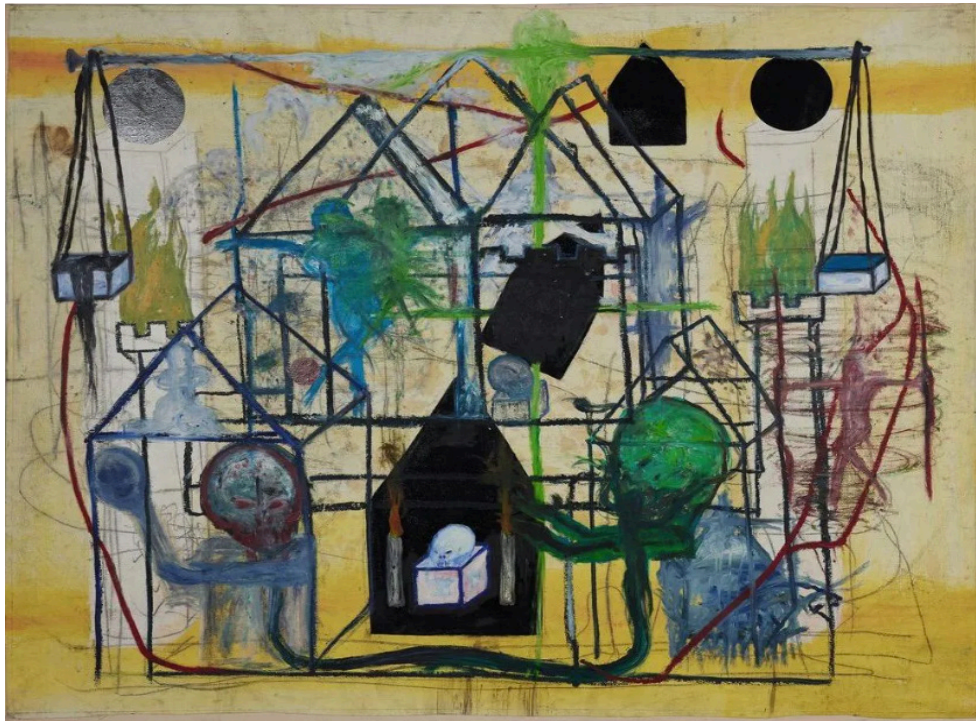


WIDEWALLS

Vito Schnabel Gallery Honors Lance de Los Reyes, a Prolific Graffiti Artist Whom We Lost in 2021

by Eli Anapur
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Lance De Los Reyes - *Lodge for Learning*, 2014. Acrylic on canvas, 76 x 95 3/4 inches (193.04 x 243.21 cm) © Estate of Lance De Los Reyes

Last year, graffiti world lost one of its leading representatives, Lance De Los Reyes, known as Rambo. Being an artist with a complex personality and artistic vision, he explored **the mysteries of life** through his art, creating works full of symbolism, imbued with layers of meaning.

To celebrate his life and work, the family of the artist, together with the Vito Schnabel Gallery in New York, is organizing an exhibition that focuses on the paintings he produced in the last years of his life. Titled *1-20-22*, which is also the artist's date of birth, the exhibition will showcase the pieces through which Reyes tried to capture **the forces of nature** that shape our everyday life.



Lance De Los Reyes - *Untitled*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas 82 x 88 inches (208.3 x 223.5 cm) © Estate of Lance De Los Reyes

A Heretic Mystagogue

Talking about the exhibition, the artist's wife, Anna De Los Reyes, described her late husband as a heretic mystagogue who created **mystical paintings** of forces that shape "who we are and what we will become." He was interested in realms that exist concurrently with what we see every day and was fascinated with the possibility to transmute these deep-rooted energies into a visual format.

Through his paintings, De Los Reyes left behind an **arcane text for decoding** that also pays respects to his artistic predecessors, such as his mentor and friend Donald Baechler, who supported De Los Reyes throughout his career. Reyes's work is highly personal, expressive of his innermost beliefs and feelings, presented in exciting combinations of forms and colors.



Left: Lance De Los Reyes - *Guardian Council VII*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas 96 x 84 inches (243.8 x 213.4 cm) © Estate of Lance De Los Reyes / Right: Lance De Los Reyes - *The Work of Boaz*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas 84 x 60 inches (213.4 x 152.4 cm) © Estate of Lance De Los Reyes

Embracing His Humanity

Born in Texas, De Los Reyes attended the San Francisco Art Institute before turning to graffiti art, and his cryptic poems on walls and upside-down crowns he depicted as a tribute to Jean-Michel Basquiat. A hard-working individual, he joined Shepard Fairey in graffiti bombing in Southern California and later on moved with him to New York.

Anna De Los Reyes explained he worked harder than anyone she has ever known, "to embrace his humanity, to reshape it for the good of all. He was vulnerable...he was flawed...he was beautifully human."

Using his own blood as paint, he served something greater than himself. He knew this as he prepared to become an inhabitant of eternity. So we are now left with

the artifacts of his endeavor- these timeless, priceless treasures.

De Los Reyes's art is filled with abstract and figural elements, such as ritual masks, forms resembling stylized images of the brain, veins and lines, and complex, interconnected forms resembling totems. Difficult to decipher, the works reverberate with **power and energy** that is sensed on an instinctive level.



Lance De Los Reyes - *Untitled*, 2021.1. Acrylic on canvas, 82 x 88 inches (208.3 x 223.5 cm) © Estate of Lance De Los Reyes

1-20-22 at Vito Schnabel Gallery

The exhibition *Lance De Los Reyes: 1-20-22* at Vito Schnabel Gallery in New York City will be on view from **January 21st until March 19th, 2022**. The opening reception is scheduled for January 20th, from 6-8 pm.