

# OCTAVIA

ART GALLERY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

*Carlos Betancourt: The Persistence of Objects*  
Selection of works from 1996–2026

April 18 – May 30, 2026

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 18, 6 – 8 pm

Arts District Reception: Saturday, May 2, 6 – 8 pm

For more than three decades, Carlos Betancourt has built a body of work that explores memory as both material and experience. His multidisciplinary practice—spanning photography, painting, sculpture, installation, and mixed media—treats images, objects, symbols, and fragments as vessels of remembrance. Across time, places, and mediums, Betancourt constructs visual systems that examine how memory expands, transforms, and persists.

Carlos Betancourt’s upcoming exhibition at Octavia Art Gallery, New Orleans, will include more than twenty works spanning thirty years, from 1996 to 2026. The presentation marks a meaningful return to a city where the artist exhibited consistently between 2005 and 2014 and represents a renewed dialogue with a place that has long been part of his artistic trajectory.

Throughout his career, Betancourt has moved fluidly between mediums while maintaining a remarkably consistent conceptual core. His work investigates the continuity of memory, the passage of time, the expansion of personal and collective histories, and the enduring power of beauty. Drawing from Caribbean roots, Miami’s cultural landscape, and Afro-Caribbean traditions and rituals, his practice embraces syncretism—the blending of cultures, histories, and spiritual systems. As the artist often reflects, “the ancestral allows us to become new,” expressing his conviction that inherited knowledge and symbolic language continually renew the present—suggesting that when we remain connected to the source, we are constantly reborn.

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Objects play a central role in Betancourt's practice. He treats them as carriers of lived experience—repositories of personal and collective memory that can be activated through artistic transformation. This exhibition traces that idea from early works such as *Faith* (1996) to later series including *El Portal*, *The Hopeful Forest*, and works referencing architectural and design motifs such as the starburst, a recurring symbol throughout his oeuvre. Additional works from the series *The Worshipping of Our Ancestors*, *El Portal*, *Re-Collections*, *Amulets for Light* and *Liminal Space: Mykonos* further reveal the continuity of themes that have shaped his practice for decades.

A major public art and environmental milestone is also on the horizon for Betancourt and architect Alberto Latorre, his frequent collaborator. The *Reef Star*—a large-scale project conceived together with Latorre and part of The ReefLine initiative—is expected to be deployed off the shore of Miami Beach. The installation, the second to be realized following artist Leandro Erlich's project, is composed of more than 50 monumental 3D-printed sculptural elements forming a giant star. Designed as both public art and living infrastructure, the *Reef Star* will function as an artificial reef and thriving marine ecosystem and has already received significant international attention.

Carlos Betancourt's work is held in numerous public and private collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the New Orleans Museum of Art; the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery; and The Bass Museum of Art, among others. His monograph *Carlos Betancourt: Imperfect Utopia* was published by Rizzoli/Skira, and his work has been exhibited internationally at art fairs such as Art Basel, Arco and Zona Maco. His projects and exhibitions have been featured in publications including *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, *Gagosian Quarterly*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Artforum*, and *ARTnews*. He continues his philanthropic work through the Betancourt-Latorre Foundation.

Octavia Art Gallery has been exhibiting artworks since 2008 and focuses on emerging, mid-career, and established artists with diverse cultural backgrounds and a strong focus on abstraction. The gallery is in the New Orleans Arts District at 700 Magazine Street, Ste. 103.