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MoMA PS1 PRESENTS FIRST SOLO MUSEUM EXHIBITION OF ARTIST REYNALDO RIVERA OPENING MAY 16

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, February 22, 2024—This spring, MoMA PS1 presents the first solo museum exhibition of artist Reynaldo Rivera (b. 1964, Mexicali, Mexico), including iconic works and never-before-seen photographs from his archive. On view from May 16 through September 9, *Reynaldo Rivera: Fistful of Love/También La belleza* features fifty artworks, comprised of black-and-white and color photographs from 1981 to the present, a feature-length film newly edited from archival Hi8 footage, and ephemera. The artist's pictures of an everyday intercultural bohemia—whether staged or captured behind the scenes—reveal their subjects as they desire to be seen: as stars in a film of their own making.

Raised between Mexicali, Stockton, Pasadena, and San Diego de la Unión, Rivera eventually settled in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles and into the artistic and activist milieu emerging around post-punk in the 1980s. As a self-taught photographer, Rivera first turned his camera to those close to him, including his sisters, who remained muses for decades. Working predominantly in black and white, the artist rinsed his earliest prints in a converted dark room, where his bathtub doubled as a developing tray. Rivera's photographs are often made with available light—both natural and artificial—a technique that indirectly emphasizes the details of social environments he depicts, making use of spotlights at the Anti-Club, vanity lights backstage, birthday candles on cake, and streetlamps on Santee Alley. His approach to image-making is informed by the drama and deep emotion of *boleros* and *rancheras*, the glamour of Old Hollywood and the Golden Age of Mexican cinema, and predecessors like Nadar, Brassai, and Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Rivera's photographs portray friends and rivals, lovers and paramours, cousins and confidants across the LA music scene, riotous house parties, improvised fashion editorials, and a string of queer clubs (La Plaza, Le Bar, The Silverlake Lounge). Some of this trove was regularly published by the alternative newspaper *LA Weekly*, or else circulated in periodicals and printed matter, as headshots and on posters. Occasionally exhibited in galleries, distributed freely to friends, and lining the walls of his home, Rivera's photographs also recur in the background of dinner parties and other late-night gatherings, indexing the world he created in real time. The artist uses photographic conventions to frame a perspective at odds with the broader cultural essentialism of the 1990s, providing a trace—both irreverent and romantic—of life at the end of the twentieth century.

Rivera's latest work includes portraits of younger artists and new friends, alongside analog and digital prints from his vast archive. The process of reevaluation divulges the vicissitudes of the intervening years: burned negatives salvaged from multiple fires; photographs ripped up by a scorned lover; and friends lost to addiction, AIDS, and other hardships who return with a haunting vivacity. Also on view is a selection of prints not previously intended for public view: a "blue" series showing his closest subjects in various states of undress. That Rivera, too, is

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often reflected within the image frame both implicates him in these scenes and suggests that his various bodies of work compose a self-portrait—with and through others.

Many of Rivera’s subjects died prematurely; as the survivors weather the years, they commingle with a growing circle of poets, singers, writers, and actors ready to pose for his camera. Embracing the beauty in decay and the humility of aging, his photographs confront life and death candidly—in a style indebted to oral storytelling traditions, which Rivera describes as “a way of leaving [behind] the stories of people that come and go.”

Reynaldo Rivera lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions have been organized by Reena Spaulings Fine Art, Los Angeles and New York (2023, 2021). He has participated in group exhibitions at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2023), the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta (2023), and the Princeton University Art Museum (2022). His work featured in *Made in L.A. 2020: a version* at the Hammer Museum and the Huntington Library, Los Angeles. His first monograph, *Provisional Notes for a Disappeared City*, was published by Semiotext(e) in 2020. Rivera's photographs are in the permanent collections of MOCA, Los Angeles; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and The Museum of Modern Art, New York. In 2025, a new monograph on Rivera will be co-published by the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA) and Semiotext(e).

The exhibition is organized by Lauren Mackler, guest curator, and Kari Rittenbach, Assistant Curator, MoMA PS1.

SUPPORT

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ABOUT MoMA PS1

MoMA PS1 champions art and artists at the intersection of the social, cultural, and political issues of our time. Providing audiences with the agency to ask questions, access to knowledge, and a forum for public debate, PS1 has offered insight into artists’ diverse worldviews for more than 40 years. Founded in 1976 by Alanna Heiss, the institution was a defining force in the alternative space movement in New York City, transforming a nineteenth century public schoolhouse in Long Island City into a site for artistic experimentation and creativity. PS1 has been a member of New York City’s Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) since 1982 and affiliated with The Museum of Modern Art since 2000.

Hours: MoMA PS1 is open from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Sunday, and Monday, and 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

Admission: \$10 suggested admission; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York State residents and MoMA members. Free admission for New York State residents is made

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MoMA PS1
22-25 Jackson Ave
Long Island City, NY 11101

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possible by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from MoMA PS1 with the Bloomberg Connects app. Read wall text, hear directly from artists, and uncover the building's history with this multimedia visitor guide. This digital experience is made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Directions: MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan. Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

Information: For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit moma.org/ps1.

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