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Two Person Exhibition *Soft Veneers and Fresh Cycles* Opens November 10th at Cluley Projects

Leslie Moody Castro Invited as First Guest Curator in Cluley Projects Curatorial Initiative

[Dallas, Texas - October 20] **Cluley Projects**, the new satellite project space of **Erin Cluley Gallery**, is pleased to announce the sixth exhibition of its inaugural season featuring artists Sara Cardona and Rabéa Ballin. The show will be curated by independent curator and writer Leslie Moody Castro as part of an annual independent curatorial initiative by Cluley Projects. The two-person show will be on view November 11th through December 11th at its location in West Dallas at 2123 Sylvan Avenue. **An Opening Reception will be hosted for the artists Wednesday November 10th from 5-8 pm.**

In this exhibition, *Soft Veneers and Fresh Cycles*, Sara Cardona and Rabéa Ballin create narrative works inspired by childhood memories, the metamorphosis of skin, and the cycles of time.

Dallas-based artist, Sara Cardona presents a transitional body of work gathered specifically from West Dallas and Oak Cliff. Using imagery collected over the past year during daily walks she contemplates feeling of visible versus invisible. Cardona discusses her work saying, “The hint of the neighborhood as mythological past – every space is charged with layers and history. Like skin you live in and eventually shed, it becomes hard to find where new and old begins.”

Houston-based artist Rabéa Ballin, known for her intricate portraits of hair and mixed media photography addresses themes of public versus private identity. Ballin states, “When isolation suddenly became the new normal, its toll began to emerge globally in subtle ways, including physical appearance. Quarantine, in its own restrictive way, was the cause of a pleasant break from self-inflicted constrictive beauty routines.”

Guest curator Leslie Moody Castro says of the project, “I am so grateful for this opportunity to collaborate with Sara and Rabéa, especially within the structure of a female-led initiative within the program of Cluley Projects. This is a group of women whom I deeply admire and respect and am honored to be included.”

About the Artists

Sara Cardona

Her work has recently been exhibited in *Texas Women: A New History of Abstract Art* at The San Antonio Museum of Art, and in *The Nasher Public Window Series*. In February 2022, her work will be included in an extensive survey of female Texas artists at Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi. Her first public art commission, *Seeding the Trail*, can currently be experienced on The Katy Trail in Dallas through March 2022. Sara is a recipient of the 2020 Nasher Artist Grant and a past recipient of the Dallas Museum of Art Kimbrough Award, as well as a C3 Visiting Artist at the DMA. Sara studied at the Kansas City Art Institute, received her BA from UT Austin, her MFA from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, PA, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Skowhegan, ME.

Rabéa Ballin,

Born in Germany, raised in Louisiana, Houston-based artist Rabea Ballin earned her BFA in design at McNeese State University and her MFA in drawing and painting at the University of Houston. Her multi-disciplinary works explore the uniqueness of self-identity, hair politics, and social commentary. She documents these themes primarily through drawing, digital photography and various printmaking practices. In addition to working as an independent artist, she is a member of the all-female ROUX printmaking collective. Rabea has served as an artist board member at both Art League Houston and DiverseWorks, and has completed residencies at DiverseWorks, Tougaloo College and Project Row Houses. Assistant professor, curator, and frequent panelist, she is currently living and working in Houston's historical Third Ward community.

About the Curator

Leslie Moody Castro is an independent curator and writer whose practice is based on itinerancy and collaboration. She has produced, organized, and collaborated on projects in Mexico and the United States for more than a decade, and her repertoire of critical writing is also reflective of her commitment to place. She is committed to creating moments of artistic exchange and dialogue and as such is a co-founder of Unlisted Projects, an artist residency program in Austin, Texas. In 2017, she was selected as Curator and Artistic Director of the sixth edition of the Texas Biennial, the first invited curator in residence at the Galveston Artist Residency. Moody Castro earned her Master's degree at The University of Texas at Austin in Museum Education with a portfolio supplement in Museum Studies in 2010, and a Bachelor's degree in Art History at DePaul University in Chicago in 2004, awarded two grants from the National Endowment of the Arts for her curatorial projects (2016, 2017). In addition to her firm belief that the visual arts create moments of empathy, Moody Castro also believes that Mariachis make everything better.

About Cluley Projects

Erin Cluley Gallery's new satellite gallery Cluley Projects opened in April 2021 and is housed in an 1100 sq ft space on Sylvan Avenue within walking distance from the Belmont Hotel. Cluley Projects will act as an incubator space focusing on regional artists and providing a platform for discovery and mentorship.

Erin Cluley Gallery opened its doors in West Dallas in 2014, igniting a creative movement and acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery moved its main operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas’ Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

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