

Omar Barquet
Oracles
October 24 – December 21, 2024



Yancey Richardson is proud to present *Oracles*, Omar Barquet's first solo exhibition at the gallery. Barquet offers a lyrical exploration of time, juxtaposing ancient symbols with contemporary imagery in the latest chapter of his ongoing project, *Ghost Variations*. The exhibition will be on view from October 24 through December 21, with an opening reception on Thursday, October 24 from 6 – 8pm.

Utilizing the artist's characteristic method of layering materials, Barquet creates a series of enigmatic collages that combine pieces of laser-cut wood, photographs, book pages, along with abstract forms, shells, pearls, and synthetic hair. Delving into the archetype of the Sybil, a prophetess whose voice, like that of the mythical *Cassandra*, carries coded messages of the future, Barquet invites viewers on a journey into the realms of ancient wisdom, mysticism, and foresight, continuing his interrogation of the fragmented nature of human existence through a rich tapestry of images, materials, and forms.

The works in *Oracles* (2022-2024) present a nonlinear view of time in which the past and future converge. Barquet's childhood experience of surviving a hurricane in his hometown on the Mexican coast offers another reference point informing his work. In *1st Oracle, Divine intervention (for P. Della Francesca)*, 2024, concentric circles have been carved into the surface of the wood, echoing the meteorological stages of a cyclone. These circles not only represent the physical formation of storms but also serve as a visual manifestation of the cyclical nature of time, suggesting an endless loop of creation, destruction, and renewal. Organic forms and swirling lines come together to create a dense architectural structure – reminiscent of stained-glass windows found in cathedrals – creating a visual dialogue between the spiritual and the earthly. At the heart of this composition is the form of a hand, pointing downward, which anchors the visual narrative, inviting contemplation of the interconnectedness of natural phenomena and human experience.

In Barquet's work, storms represent both literal and figurative forces, as in *3rd Vision, The eye storm (for Licofrón)*, 2024, which exemplifies his ability to blend mystical and prosaic elements. This richly layered composition, in which a fragmented image of a woman's face is overlaid with abstract geometric patterns and circular forms, speaks to both physical and emotional turbulence, as well as the unpredictable power of nature. The inclusion of hair-like material adds a tactile quality, creating a work that feels alive and in constant motion.

The symbolic use of eyes in numerous works, both open and closed, speaks to the confluence of internal and external forces that impact our daily existence, as well as the Sybil's omniscient ability to see the future. In *2nd Vision, Maelström (after Z. T. Vizcaino)*, 2024, eye and storm coalesce above an image of tumultuous waters, situating the viewer amidst the hurricane. Beneath the waves, the talons of a bird emerge, creating directional tension with the downward pull of the *Maelstrom*, or whirlpool. Barquet arranges multiple perspectives, expressed not only through vision, but through time and layered states of

being. The works in *Oracles* invite viewers to consider the tension between the tangible and the ethereal, the known and the unknown, offering a powerful meditation on the forces that govern our world.

Born 1979 in Chetumal, México, Omar Barquet received his BFA from La Esmeralda, the National School of Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking in Mexico City, where he currently lives and works. Barquet has received numerous awards including the Young Artists Fellowship in painting and printmaking from FONCA (Fondo Nacional para las Cultura y las Artes), Mexico; Museo de arte Carillo Gil, Mexico; and has taken part in artist residencies including Capacete, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Casa Tomada, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Tupac, Lima, Perú; Vestfossen, Norway; Kiosko, Bolivia. He was selected for the XV and XVI Tamayo Biennial, and is in permanent collections including The Jumex Collection, Mexico City; Pérez Art Museum, Miami; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Mexico; Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota; Museo de Arte de Sonora, Mexico; and Phoenix Museum of Art, Arizona among others.

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Image above: Omar Barquet, *Like a Seed in a Shadow of a Stone (Cassandra) (for L. Clark)*, 2018-22. Mixed media collage with custom artist frame, 59 x 43 inches.