

# URBAN POP

## **MATEO BLANCO**

Mateo Blanco is a gifted visual artist known for the remarkably vivid and beautiful portraits he has made of celebrities using unusual media. Among his best-known works are a portrait of Dolly Parton made from pieces of cloth, portraits of Ellen DeGeneres and Oprah Winfrey made with coffee beans and a sculpture of baseball star Hank Aaron made with chocolates and chocolate wrappers. His most successful work—on view at The Louisville Slugger Museum in Louisville, Kentucky—is a portrait of actress Jennifer Lawrence, made with 10,000 peanuts. It was the museum's most-photographed item in 2016.

Blanco's formal training in fine art began in Medellin, Colombia, where he studied under the direction of Débora Arango Pérez, the venerable painter, ceramicist and graphic artist known for her politically charged portrayals of nude female figures challenging Catholic values who was immortalized on the country's 2,000 peso bill. He also studied with Arturo Estrada Hernández, the Mexican painter known for his mural work as well as his membership in "Los Fridos," a group of Frida Kahlo's students, and Lola Vélez, recognized as one of Diego Rivera's favorite students and considered the first female muralist of Colombia. Additional studies include goldsmithing and jewelry in Medellin, Colombia, and a B.A. from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida.

Original works by Mateo Blanco can be found in locations throughout the world including Cape Town, South Africa; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Queensland, Australia; Miami, Key West, Panama City and Orlando, Florida; Gatlinburg, Tennessee; Prince Edward Island and Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada; Bogota, Colombia; Mexico City, Mexico; and New York.

## **Biographical Information**

1981      Born; Miami, Florida

## **Selected Exhibitions**

2014      Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum; Orlando, Florida  
            Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum; New York

2015      The Louisville Slugger Museum; Louisville, Kentucky

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## **Selected Exhibitions (continued)**

- 2016      Disney Springs Resort; Orlando, Florida
- 2017      *Mateo Blanco*, The Virginia Miller Gallery; Miami, Florida
- 2018      Aloft Orlando Downtown; Orlando, Florida  
The Memphis Zoo; Memphis, Tennessee  
Wafi Mall; Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- 2019      *Rusty Batman*, Tampa International Airport; Tampa Bay, Florida  
Orlando Museum of Art; Orlando, Florida
- 2020      Janes' Art Center; New Smyrna Beach, Florida
- 2021      Gallery Biba; Palm Beach, Florida
- 2022      Duque Arango Contemporáneo Gallery; Medellin, Colombia
- 2023      Casa Zirio Galeria; Bogota, Colombia
- 2024      Boca Raton Museum of Art; Boca Raton, Florida  
Museum of Art—DeLand; DeLand, Florida  
The Butler Institute of American Art; Youngstown, Ohio

## **Public and Private Collections**

Boca Raton Museum of Art  
George H. W. Bush  
The Butler Institute of American Art  
Disney Springs  
The Walt Disney Company  
Lucy Doughty Art Collection  
Francia Escobar  
FedEx Corporation  
The Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory  
Diego & Gisela Lowenstein  
Domenico Maurici  
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## Public and Private Collections (continued)

Museo Maja; Jericó, Antioquia, Colombia  
Museum of Art—DeLand  
The ONE Group  
Jim Pattison  
The Jim Pattison Group  
PepsiCo, Inc.  
Dr. Esther Pichardo & Dr. Angel De Los Reyes  
Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum, multiple locations  
The Ritz Carlton; South Beach, Florida  
STK Orlando  
Francia Escobar de Zárate Art Collection

## Selected Publications

- 2018      *Odd is Art*. Ripley's Believe It or Not!
- 2019      Meyer, Edward. *Buying the Bizarre: Confessions of a Compulsive Collector*.
- 2021      *Caged Bird* (film about Mateo Blanco), Fusion Fest; Orlando, Florida.
- 2024      "Francia Escobar Field, renowned patroness of the arts in Colombia, opens her doors to the work Colombia by Mateo Blanco," *ArtDaily.com*.  
"Museum of Art in DeLand Showcases Mateo Blanco's 'Hopi Girl' Sculpture," *World Art News*.  
"Boca Raton Museum of Art presents a special presentation & workshop of American flags by Mateo Blanco," *ArtDaily.com*.