



Five Artists and Two Curators Selected to Participate
in the 2016
Davidoff International Art Residency in collaboration
with
The Altos de Chavón School of Design in the
Dominican Republic
January 25 - April 3, 2016

[#DavidoffArts](#)



Jimmy Robert, *It's not lame...it's Lamé*, 2015.
Archival inkjet print, text on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm (each).
Courtesy of Tanya Leighton Art

Basel, Switzerland, September 30, 2015—The Davidoff Art Initiative, in collaboration with The Altos de Chavón School of Design, is pleased to announce the selection of five international artists and two curators who will take part in the Davidoff International Art Residency, hosted by The Altos de Chavón School of Design in La Romana, Dominican Republic, from January 25 to April 3, 2016.

This year marks the second time the Davidoff Art Initiative and The Altos de Chavón School, the leading institution for art and design in the country, have welcomed international artists to the Dominican Republic, with five artists participating in the previous round of residencies in 2015. In addition, this year will see the residency program expand to include two international curators.

The participating artists in 2016 are **Paolo Chiasera** (b. 1978, Italy); **Louis Henderson** (b.1983, England) and **Ana Vaz** (b. 1986, Brazil); **Jimmy Robert** (b. 1975, France); and **Oscar Santillan** (b. 1980, Ecuador). Additionally **Natasha Ginwala** (b. 1985, India) and **Polly Staple** (b. 1970, England) will take part in a curatorial project. All the participants share a common, profound interest in engaging with the social and cultural fabric of the Dominican Republic through their respective practices. In addition to pursuing their own work during the residency, the artists will have many opportunities to interact with the Dominican cultural community as well as with students and residents of Altos de Chavón and the surrounding region.

The nominators for the 2016 Davidoff International Art Residency Program were **Aaron C zar**, founding director of Delfina Foundation in London; **Amanda Coulson**, co-founder/executive director of VOLTA and director of the National Gallery of the Bahamas; **Charles Desmarais**, president of the San Francisco Art Institute; **Mareike Dittmer**, co-publisher of the magazine *frieze* d/e and publishing consultant for *frieze* magazine; **Pablo Helguera**, director of adult and academic programs in the Department of Education at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; **Irene Hofmann**, the Phillips Director and Chief Curator of SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico; and **Philip Tinari**, director of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, in Beijing.

“The Davidoff Art Initiative is pleased to foster the cultural dialogue initiated with last year’s inaugural residency program,” said **Hans-Kristian Hoejsgaard**, CEO **Oettinger Davidoff AG**. “We value cultural exchange and seek to facilitate new collaborations between creative communities in the Caribbean and the rest of the world. We could not be more pleased with these exceptional participating artists and curators and we look forward to what their time in the Dominican Republic will bring.”

“What a varied and interesting group the Davidoff Art Initiative has planned for Chav n in 2016. We are all eager to have them as part of the Chav n family,” said **Stephen Kaplan**, **Secretary of Altos de Chav n Cultural Center Foundation and Rector of Altos de Chav n School of Design**. “We are proud to participate and support this auspicious project. We are grateful to the Davidoff Art Initiative for the opportunity to engage with an enterprise supporting creativity and diversity.”

About the Artists

Paolo Chiasera (b. 1978, Italy) is an artist whose painting, video, performance, and installation work explores notions of collective memory, historical image, myth, and cultural iconography by reinserting set pieces from films, literature, and philosophy into new narratives. Chiasera received his MA from the Academy of Fine Art in Bologna, Italy, in 2003, and has participated in many group and solo exhibitions at institutions and galleries including Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Roma, Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, and Daniel Marzona galerie in Germany. Through his ongoing curatorial project, **SECONDO STILE**, which has been staged in Germany, Burma, and India, Chiasera engages and collaborates with artists from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and artistic practices.

Louis Henderson (b.1983, England) and **Ana Vaz** (b. 1986, Brazil) are an art- and filmmaking duo whose work examines interrelationships between language and cinema through colonial histories, capitalism, technology, utopianism, and the politics of (an)otherness. Graduates of London College of Communication and Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains, and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains respectively, Henderson and Vaz’s solo and collaborative work has been screened at such film festivals and institutions as the New York Film Festival, Rotterdam International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Visions du R el, Tate Modern, and Whitechapel Gallery. Both artists have exhibited in both solo and group shows at various international institutions and galleries. Vaz was formerly a member of SPEAP, the experimental research group in art and politics, directed by Bruno Latour. Henderson is currently completing a post-dipl me within an experimental art and research group at the European School of Visual Arts, where his research focuses on new materialities of the Internet and the neocolonialisaton of cyber space through planetary-scale computing.

Jimmy Robert (b. 1975, France) is an artist whose videos, installations, and collages take choreography as their central concern, with allusions to the theatrical, contemporary dance, conceptualism, and feminism. A graduate of Goldsmiths College in London, Robert has exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions at Palais de Tokyo, Tate Britain, The Drawing Room, Mus e d’art moderne et contemporain Geneva, and the 8th Berlin Biennale f r zeitgen ssische Kunst. Robert currently leads approximately fifteen students at Berlin’s Universit t der Kunst (UdK) in a workshop that attempts to define performance and collaboration with reference to various movements and schools of performance, exploring notions of documentation and subjectivity, as well as appropriation, masquerade, and gender.

Oscar Santillan (b. 1980, Ecuador) is an artist whose installations and photographs draw on organic forms and shifting materialities in order to argue for the existence of a territory where fact and fiction are interchangeable. Santillan received his MFA in Sculpture from Virginia Commonwealth University in the United States, and has

exhibited at Carrillo Gil Museum of Art, Fundacion ODEON, Copperfield Gallery, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Poli/graphic Triennial, Oud-Rekem Castle, Vogt Gallery, The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art - SECCA, and Bonnefanten Museum, among others. Santillan has attended multiple residencies, at the Delfina Foundation, Jan van Eyck, Fondazione Ratti, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and Seven Below, among others.

About the Curators

Natasha Ginwala (b. 1985, India) is an independent curator, researcher and writer. She is curatorial advisor and Public Programmes curator for the Gujral Foundation's project, *My East is Your West*, at the 56th Venice Biennale, and was a member of the artistic team at the 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art. Ginwala received her MA from The School of Arts & Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, and a post-graduate diploma from the Asian College of Journalism in Chennai. Recent projects include *Landings*, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and other partner organizations (with Vivian Ziherl); The Museum of Rhythm at Taipei Biennial (with curator Anselm Franke); *Inexactly This*, Kunstvlaai: Festival of Independents, Amsterdam. Ginwala has taught in the Masters Programme (Artistic Research) at the University of Amsterdam and the Sandberg Institute, as well as on the Studium Generale Programme at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. She has contributed to several publications and periodicals including *Afterall Online*, *Art Agenda*, *e-flux Journal*, *Manifesta Journal*, and *Metropolis M*, among others.

Polly Staple (b. 1970, England) has been Director of Chisenhale Gallery, London since 2008, where she has developed the exhibitions program to encompass sound, video and film commissions, as well as inaugurating the 'Interim' performance program; '21st Century', a research-based discursive program of one-off talks and events, and 'Offsite', public commissions engaging with the social and cultural context of East London. Staple was previously Director of Frieze Projects, where she instigated the curatorial program now realized annually at Frieze Art Fair, London and New York. Staple has commissioned solo projects and exhibitions by artists such as Pawel Althamer, Jeremy Deller, Roman Ondák, Mark Leckey, Martha Rosler, Hito Steyerl, Seth Price and Cathy Wilkes, and with emerging artists such as Duncan Campbell, Janice Kerbel, Christina Mackie, Lynette Yiadom Boakye, Amalia Pica, Haroon Mirza, James Richards, Ed Atkins, Helen Marten, Corin Sworn, Alexandra Bachzetsis, Pratchaya Phintong, Mariana Castillo Deball, Camille Henrot and Ahmet Öğüt. Staple has written for numerous catalogues and publications, most recently on 'Curatorial Studies', Seth Price, Clemens von Wedeymer, and 'Film as Critical Practice'. Staple regularly serves as tutor and lecturer at art colleges across London.

About The Altos de Chavón School of Design, Casa de Campo, La Romana, Dominican Republic

The Altos de Chavón School of Design is an educational institution with global impact, and a pioneer in the teaching of art and design in the Dominican Republic. Founded in 1983 to meet the growing commercial and industrial demands of the Dominican Republic, and affiliated with Parsons School of Design, a Division of New York City's venerable and internationally renowned New School University since its foundation, the school offers long- and short-format university-level programs in communication design, fashion design, fine arts, illustration, digital design, interior design, photography, film production, and architecture. For more information, please visit altosdechavon.edu.do.

About the Davidoff Art Initiative

The Davidoff Art Initiative supports contemporary art and artists in the Caribbean, strengthens art organizations in the Dominican Republic, shares knowledge and expertise about contemporary art and fosters cultural engagement between the Caribbean and the rest of the world. At the core of the Art Initiative, Davidoff aims to engage closely with the arts and culture of the Dominican Republic, where much of its production and many of its employees are based, bringing opportunity and visibility to the art and culture of the Caribbean region, and extending the company's long-standing commitment to artistry, craftsmanship, community and quality. The Davidoff Art Initiative's four global program areas are Art Residencies, Art Dialogues, Art Grants, and Art Editions.

About Oettinger Davidoff AG

The CHF 1.23 billion Oettinger Davidoff AG with over 3,600 employees around the world, traces its roots back to 1875 and remains family owned to this day, with two distinctly different businesses: one that is focused on FMCG distribution in the Swiss market and one dedicated to the core business of producing, marketing and retailing premium branded cigars, tobacco products and accessories. The premium branded cigar business includes Davidoff, AVO, Camacho, Cusano, Griffin's, Private Stock, Zino and Zino Platinum. Oettinger Davidoff AG is anchored in a strong "crop-to-shop" philosophy, having pursued a vertical integration from the tobacco fields in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua to the worldwide network of almost 70 Davidoff Flagship Stores.

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