

The merging, burning, and layering of raw organic materials are common processes within Francheska Alcántara's practice. Their use of certain materials, such as the Hispano cuaba soap, reflects their works' overall engagement with the customs and subjectivity of Caribbean and Black diasporic identity. Manufactured in the Dominican Republic, the soap is a quintessential Caribbean household item with multifaceted uses, including as laundry detergent, for treating wounds, patching leaks, or cleansing the body. The amber-colored, cubed-shaped material, made from the extracted oil of a pine tree, is a grounding element for Alcántara's newest sculptural series, *Tiger Jaw* (2022), in which they merge and fuse the soap onto a custom-made wooden structure. In *Tiger Jaw III* (2022), a darkened piece of wood, burnt and scorched by fire, emerges from the center of a charred and melted cuaba soap. The work's unique, organic shape, inspired by forms in the artist's drawings, suggests a vessel holding and containing a poetic power. The glistening soap is akin to a salve for a wound, soothing and healing a burn injury to the skin. Their fusion of organic materials (sourced from their residency at Tulsa Artist Fellowship in Tulsa, Oklahoma) transforms Alcántara's sculptural work into an illustration of their psycho-geographical journey in Tulsa, especially their consideration of the city's history. Alcántara's sculptures offer a path for emergence and transformation, and function as sacred capsules for collective memory. Their composition of materials from the Caribbean and the central United States converges different lineages of Black experience into a vessel that offers the potentiality of healing.





FRANCHESKA ALCÁNTARA
Tiger Jaw III, 2022
Hispano cuaba soap, acrylic and
resin on wood
12 x 9.5 x 3 inches
30.5 x 24.1 x 7.6 cm
LM33798



FRANCHESKA ALCÁNTARA
Tiger Jaw IV, 2022
Hispano cuaba soap, acrylic and
resin on wood
12 x 9.5 x 3 inches
30.5 x 24.1 x 7.6 cm
LM33799

Handwoven from fibers into a fluid grid-like structure, Carolina Caycedo's series of malleable fishnet sculptures, *Cosmotarrayas* (2016), were collected and gifted, among other objects, during the artist's field research trips to several riverside communities in rural areas of Colombia and Brazil. The sculptural pieces of hand-dyed artisanal nets are hung from the ceiling, creating varying conical and tent-like shapes. Caycedo combines these nets with personal objects from the communities she visited to create vessels that speak to the histories of land, people, and individuals concerning the dispossession and resistance of extractive development projects in several American bioregions. Her fishing nets function as a tactile form of abstract information that embodies and conveys the traditions and memories of the individuals who wove them. Created by hand, each net carries a unique thickness of knots and ties encoded with traditional forms of wisdom, knowledge, sovereignty, and sense of value. Caycedo's *Cosmotarrayas* is related to her ongoing project, *BE DAMMED* (2012-present), where she critically researches and explores the environmental and social effects of several prominent dam locations within Brazil. Part of her process for this project involves combining drawings, interviews, and satellite images to highlight the altering ramifications of these projects on the multiple ecosystems, waterways, and communities they impact.

Caycedo's large-scale mural, *Yuma, or the Land of Friends II* (2020), merges satellite imagery of the El Quimbo Dam in Colombia during its construction phases from 2010-2014, which redirected the Magdalena Rivera (a main waterway) that dramatically affected the land and indigenous communities of the region, with topographic maps and aerial photos from the 1940s and 50s. The varying patterns and shapes of the Earth's body captured in her pictures appear distinguishable, but it takes a moment to decipher and recognize the multiple layers of various topographical features of the land's surface from distinct points in time that Caycedo has heavily manipulated—she layers and melds much of the features of her source material into an almost abstract composition. Her work reveals the physical dislocation of the natural world, a body that has been stripped, carved, and restructured in the name of development and progress.

Her works collectively reveals the multiple bodies affected by these industrial-based projects and the interconnectedness between ourselves and the natural elements of rivers, stones, and trees that surround us. Caycedo's work asks viewers to reconsider our gaze and reevaluate our understanding of how we relate to our environments—ultimately how our bodies relate to land and place. Her work, rooted in a decolonial perspective and pan-Indigenous cosmological belief system, extends the possibilities of human interaction with and co-existence within the natural world.





CAROLINA CAYCEDO
Yuma, or the Land of Friends II, 2020
printed vinyl wallpaper
196.06 x 324.02 inches
498 x 823 cm
Edition of 2 with 1 AP (exhibition copy)
LM33994

Layers of history are referenced in the minimalist language of Adriana Corral's most recent series, *A Palimpsest*. Her blurred ink texts and carefully drawn surfaces reveal fragments of archival documents identified during her Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, where she amassed documents, telegrams, photographs, and blueprints from the National Archives and Records Administration and Library of Congress. In each work, Corral creates a layered veneer that is both delicate and rigorous in process. She prepares each paneled surface so that it is ready to absorb her transfers and drawings, which reveal the political targeting of Mexican immigrants as contagious carriers for disease and the subsequent creation of an atmosphere of racialized paranoia in California, Texas, and the Southwest—a sentiment that public officials capitalized on to implement harsher border-control policies.

Corral's series focuses on the delousing practices used along the United States and Mexico border in which toxic chemicals were applied to the bodies of men and women entering the nation—a practice that began early in the 20th century at the height of the Mexican Revolution, World War I, the Typhus epidemic, and the Spanish flu pandemic. This atmosphere, coupled with the Eugenics movement, led to enacting strict border restrictions. As part of the "sanitization" process, the American Federal Government used kerosene, cyanide-based chemicals, and Zyklon B on individuals seeking to enter the United States from Mexico, as well as on their personal belongings. The headline regarding the "Riot Among Juarez Women: Auburn-Haired Amazon at Santa Fe Street Bridge Leads Feminine Outbreak" highlights how descriptive language is placed upon the bodies of Mexican women to visualize them as a physical threat and concern to public health and safety. The riot and the shutdown of the Santa Fe bridge between El Paso, Texas and the city of Juarez, Mexico, was due in large part to women protesting the delousing procedures, which required them to completely undress, in addition to rumors that nude photographs of the women were being circulated. While the demonstration, spearheaded by 17-year-old Carmelita Torres, protested against these cruel and unjust procedures, newspaper coverage of the event fixated on the women's disruption to the public rather than on their calls for humane treatment.

Corral's work echoes a similar pattern of social-political content found throughout art history. Illustrated in Francisco Goya's *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (*The Disaster of War*) (1810-1820) etchings, both operate as visual records to the world's cruel acts as observed in the artists' lifetimes. Corral's work functions not only as a form of documentation, but also as a method for unearthing and dissecting the language and architecture that has helped enact this treatment of othered bodies. Influenced by a family background of medical professionals, the artist holds a strong interest in the medical field. Her comprehensive, research-based practice frequently broaches topics related to hegemonic power, as well as violent and repressive treatment of marginalized individuals. By visualizing unacknowledged and erased histories, Corral reveals scars within our American landscape, exposing racialized sentiments and the dehumanizing treatment of individuals in order to highlight the need for these to be addressed and repaired for future generations.





ADRIANA CORRAL

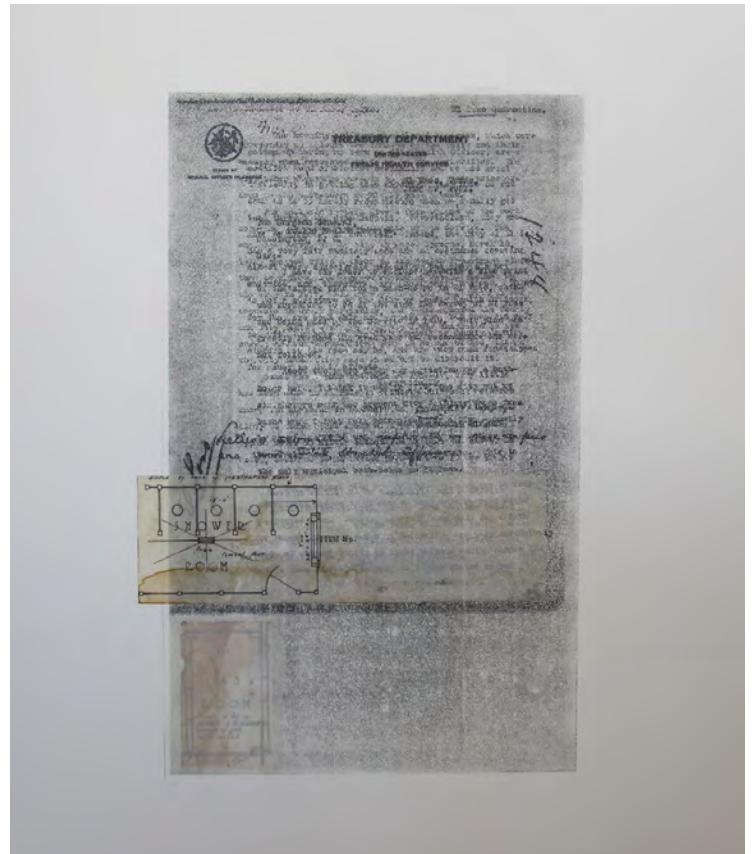
A Palimpsest Item No. 01, 2022

ink, lithographic crayon, pen, and NARA documents
transferred onto gessobord panel (Türkis bläulich)

24 x 24 x 2 inches

61 x 61 x 5.1 cm

LM33787



ADRIANA CORRAL

A Palimpsest Item No. 05, 2022

ink, lithographic crayon, pen, and NARA documents
transferred onto gessobord panel

24 x 24 x 2 inches

61 x 61 x 5.1 cm

LM33791

Composed of layers of ink, paint, and wax pencil, David Antonio Cruz's drawings from his *Icutfromtehmiddletogetabetterslice* (2021-present) series honor the individuals of his "chosen family" — the love and bonds created between queer individuals as a form of survival and kinship. Cruz began these works in 2020, during the pandemic, as part of his contemplation of the loss of individuals and how we, as a society, honor our family and ancestors. Curator and art historian Dr. Susanna V. Temkin described the works from this series, a decadent display and analysis of familial bonds and queer relationships, as borrowing from the Dutch group portraiture tradition known as regentessenstuk.

Icutfromtehmiddletogetabetterslice includes a set of larger-scale paintings that pull the viewer into a dazzling space of lush patterns and bright color palettes. In Cruz's dark grayscale drawings from this series, however, his compositions and landscapes establish an intimate and meditative space that, while almost haunting, is beautiful to behold. Silhouettes of flora and organic forms from specific geographic locations across the US compose one layer of his work. Particular plants signify the sites where his chosen family lives, while the lighter motifs are formed from childhood memories. Cruz also uses the ceiba, a tree indigenous to Mexico, the Caribbean, and West Africa, as a grounding motif to signify his chosen family's strong, deep roots. He views these drawings as a moment of meditation or as a slower reading of his lush paintings — almost as if they were two sides of an LP or record. The works speak the same language but with a different resonance and tune, compelling the viewer to engage more deeply.

Slow and intentional engagement is a critical part of Cruz's practice, as the artist wants the viewer to meditatively engage with each work and reconsider the realities and contexts in which bodies are interpreted. Even within his drawings, moments of negative space create a pause, a glitch, or an in-between space where alternate modes of reality exist and flourish. Individual bodies and faces begin to emerge from the density of a lush forest and tangled vegetation of tree branches and leaves. Between these multiple layers, there is a collapse of organic forms, negative space, and bodily shapes that creates visual tension, making the viewer question and decipher the space in which the sitters exist.





DAVID ANTONIO CRUZ
aswefadeagain, timemeetsus,
andwearedestroyed, 2022

ink, flashe, and wax pencil on watercolor paper

Diptych, each panel:

71 x 51.5 inches (paper)

180.3 x 130.8 cm

LM33781

Kira Dominguez Hultgren's weavings are a source code of information, memory, and access to knowledge. She uses a unique set of individual structured lines and paths that cross each other, intersecting, knotting, and loosening at varying points that, when tightened and pulled together, reveal either an abstracted set of patterns and shapes or legible text for the viewer to read. Many of her works record a story told through her fingers and body, relaying specific research points or narratives from her background and artistic lineage, including where she learned to weave certain styles, such as from Mary Coronado, a Mapuche-Argentine weaver, or where the artist first encountered weaving and was introduced to the backstrap loom in zocalos in Mexico.

Dominguez Hultgren's works disrupt, collide, and blend numerous cultures and histories to reveal the complicated reality of existing and living.

She views her work as a "scaffolding for stories," a container for the memories and experiences that she notes "previous generation[s] had to forget, and another generation had to remember; both generations weaving into one another." Her works are a vessel for cultural memory where she stores and retells the stories of various people, locations, and histories that she engages with or researches. Thinking of her work as a system of data and codes, she manually inserts handspun wool into her matrix to vocalize stories and highlight disruption points regarding topics such as colonialism, race, and ethnic identity. Through the beats of her fingers and hands moving in a rhythmic tempo, she makes distinct choices to disrupt the loom and move counter to fixed singular traditions and definitions of identity or material as an aggressive gesture against the colonial perceptions and structures that attempt to restrict individuals.





KIRA DOMINGUEZ HULTGREN

A perpetual and continuous splitting, 2022

handspun brown: skins, fleeces, straps, fabrics, yarns, silks,
loom bars, zip ties, sticks, and other hardware

162 x 126 x 26 inches (dimensions variable)

411.5 x 320 x 66 cm

LM33800

Gradients of colors pulsate across Leslie Martinez's textured canvases, *The Glimmer of an Arc Bending Back and Through a Pulse* (2022) and *A Wedge of Light Roots to Split the Ice Above the Current* (2022), sublimely blending a celestial palette that appears sourced from the horizon. Pops of bright colors swirl and dance, touching the twisted tucks, lifts, and folded textures of the artist's surfaces. Their use of color and materiality is a signature part of their style that speaks to the power of abstraction as a form of radical imagination and world-building. Using a range of hand-mixed paints, they play with thickness, transparency, and variegation as a visual embodiment of the emotions and sensational power that color holds. Their surfaces, produced from a cache of cast-off materials, such as shirts, rags, and pieces of failed attempts for other works, relates to their practice of a no-waste ethos and resourcefulness that holds the possibility for a transformative state of being. This resourcefulness is an inherent and embodied knowledge for individuals, frequently those in the borderlands, who live in precarious situations but make do and amplify the materials at hand, transforming them into new creative and uncanny realities. Martinez enacts this wisdom through a scope of painting techniques that recall the pooling stains of Helen Frankenthaler or Anselm Kiefer's layering of ash and clay. Through their unique painting techniques and building up of materials, their canvases emulate a body or skin restructured and recombined into organic compositional shapes of radiating lines and swirls.

Martinez's work is heavily influenced by borderland existence. With ancestral ties to the Rio Grande Valley, they frequently navigated a checkpoint on many road trips to and from Dallas and the South Texas-Mexico border. Their encounters in this borderland space guided their interests in considering how racist and xenophobic perceptions of belonging and exclusion relate to the structures of queerness and transness in terms of the required negotiations and coding necessary for survival. Additional influences include the late scholar José Esteban Muñoz, whose theory of queerness offers itself a state of potentiality and an unpromised horizon yet to be reached. Their abstract paintings are a blueprint for the possibilities of queer imagination that would construct a liberatory future where individuals can exist as their whole selves, without any societal or legal restrictions placed upon their bodies. Through their paintings, they envision how bodies can safely navigate, evade, and move openly amongst various lands and across strict binaries of identity, as if the textured surfaces and range of colors offer codes and techniques for how to camouflage, imitate, or be hyper-visible as a strategy for safety and a way to exist.





LESLIE MARTINEZ

The Glimmer of an Arc Bending Back and Through a Pulse, 2022

fabric, paper, crushed charcoal, crushed rock, sawdust, wood ash, iron oxide, and acrylic on canvas

90 x 70 x 4 inches

228.6 x 177.8 x 10.2 cm

LM33796

Glendalys Medina's use of nails and thread creates a reticulated surface that connects points of their works, *The Owl* (2020), and *The Sun* (2020), into singular beings. The physical and, at times, grueling process of creating these objects reveals a layer of understanding of how their work is not simply static geometric shapes and symbols, but a form brought to life through the artist's repetitive bodily action. Through their rigorous and meticulous process of cutting, hammering, and binding, they imbue and energize each work with spirit and character—bringing them to active life. The composition and repetitive shapes in each work activate a sense of movement, establishing rhythmic and bodily gestures. Much of Medina's works are musically driven and influenced by abstract forms that aid the understanding of visual movement. One can imagine the works gliding through space as animated characters encountering each other on a hero's journey.

Composed of nails, wire, thread, and paint, Medina's work speaks to what it is to be Puerto Rican through a reclamation of history and fictional retelling that contemporizes a discussion of identity, migration, and heritage. Their work resuscitates and breathes life

into Taíno culture, which was eradicated and syncretized with African and Spanish cultures through colonization. *The Owl* spreads its golden wings and feathers—made of thread—high above its head, taking flight and actively gliding across the wall, while *The Sun* rotates its reflective surface of wires and nails as it makes its way through space.

Medina's sculptural series tells the story of the hero's journey through the artist's distinct visual language of geometric abstraction combined with the myths and iconographies of the indigenous people of the Caribbean, the Taínos. Their most recent work, started during the 2020 quarantine, answers the existential call of "What would I do if I could only live for one more day or year?" Medina responded by embracing the symbols and imagery of Taíno culture that have been part of their life since childhood. Each of their sculptural pieces is an interpretation of the individual characters that belong to a broader story of Taíno beliefs, interpreted by friar Jeronimo Ramon Pane in 1498. Medina retells the original interpretation through their methodical visual language and syntax of shapes and symbols.





GLENDALYS MEDINA
The Sun (El Sol), 2020
paint, ink, oil pastel, thread and nails on wood
42 x 56 inches
106.7 x 142.2 cm
LM33786

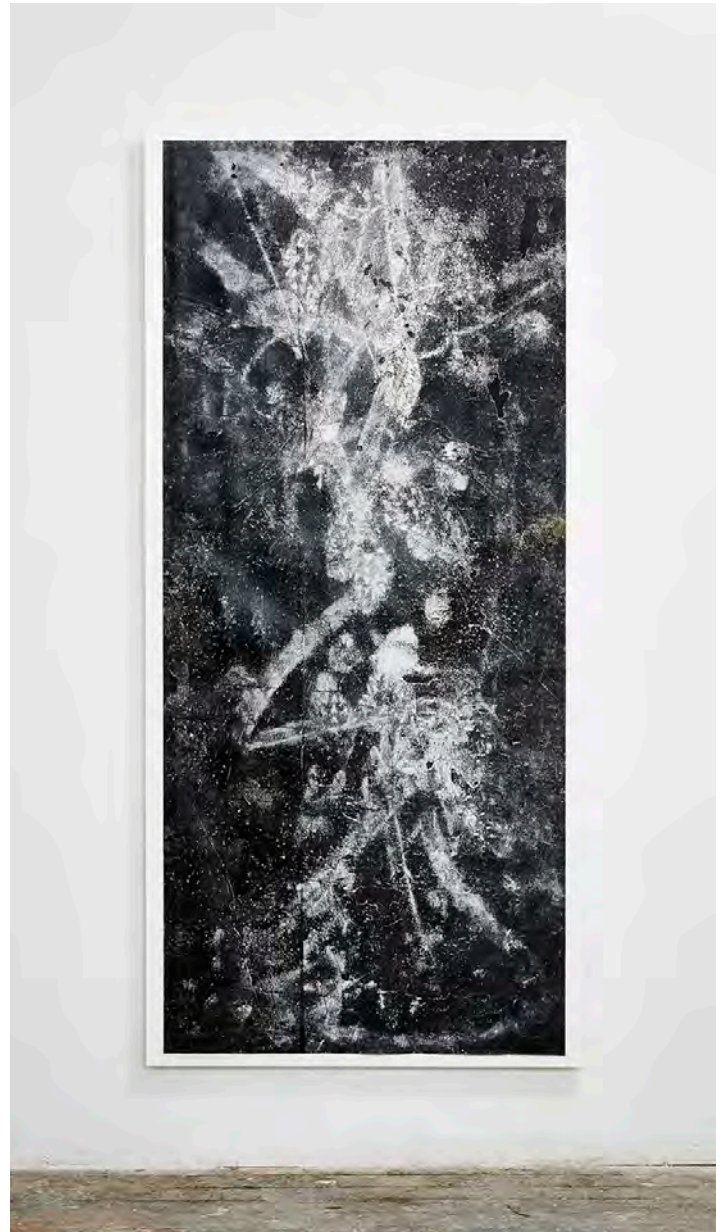
After a tropical cyclone touches land, it alters the landscape and all the edifices that inhabit its surface. In discussing his work, Meris has noted how he would see roof materials strewn across the ground in his home country of the Bahamas after a hurricane. For those who weathered the storm, these materials would be a cultural signifier for recovery, picking up and rebuilding what was destroyed. His use of roofing paper as a canvas for his drawings in his *I, Used to Be* (2020-2021) series connects to his creative process of reusing materials and his sense of renewal that the body goes through. His drawings are scaled to his physical size, embodying a ghostly presence and existence within the work. The gestural marks of white plaster particles, sourced from his previous series *Now You See Me*; *Now You Don't* (2020), are pressed against the black roofing paper with a paint roller, revealing his bodily presence through an abstract language of markings and gestures. Visually, Meris' works recalls Lamia Joreige's *One Night of Sleep* (2013) series, which features life-size photograms where the artist captured the movement of her body while sleeping over a period of months (itself connected to Yves Klein's body paintings *Anthropometries* (1960), to which Joreige pays tribute). Yet, Meris' drawings' gestural presence and pressing action are more akin to David Hammons' *Body Prints* (1968-1979), where they are a notation of Black living. However, Meris' non-figural language conjures the body into a ghostly presence that is barely visible.

For Meris, a personal experience within the New York subway system several years ago left him questioning ideas of representation and senses of unbelonging, ultimately posing the question of how he is represented and is read in space. His *I, Used to Be* series emerged from these poignant issues through a mix of materiality that conceals but also reveals the body as a gestural mark. Meris addresses what it means to exist, or merely to be a body in a world without preconceived notions, as well as to hold a space—to be in constant being and existence. The title of the series, based on the French translation of "I am" as "je suis" found in the conjugation of the verb être, means to be. Studying French at the University of The Bahamas, Meris found this translation and use of the verb to be a touching title to reflect how his work exists in a constant state of being—often evolving and recycling ideas from across his practice.





JEFFREY MERIS
I, Used To Be XIII, 2021
plaster particles on roofing paper, double sided adhesive tape
81 x 42 x 3 inches
205.7 x 106.7 x 7.6 cm
LM33998



JEFFREY MERIS
I, Used To Be XII, 2021
plaster particles on roofing paper, double sided adhesive tape
81 x 42 x 3 inches
205.7 x 106.7 x 7.6 cm
LM33997

Esteban Ramón Pérez combines the remnants of an American flag with leather—a staple material choice within his practice as the son of an upholstery shop owner—with boxing glove cotton interior, silk, acrylic, and wood to construct an abstract language that both reveals and conceals personal and cultural signifiers. His painting titled *Star Spangled* (2019), establishes a language that maneuvers and pivots according to the viewers' ability to read and decipher certain materials and processes that he incorporates into the work. Even before he stitches and fuses his materials into a singular entity, he sketches and maps out the leather body—methodically laying out every stitch and point of connection. Ramón Pérez creates a navigational map for how the body of his work is to be composed and subsequently read.

The American flag is one of the most widely recognizable symbols globally and is ubiquitous with Americanism or American patriotism. Ramón Pérez questions and references the complications of Americanism and offers the cultural codes and signifiers from his subjectivity and distinct material choices as a response. He uses remnants of the heavily infused patriotic emblem of the flag to deface and reconstruct the object and its symbolism into a

patchwork composition of disjointed and fragmented scenes that perhaps alludes to the socio-political reality of 2019 in the United States, where impeachment and immigration were pervasive issues.

Ramón Pérez follows a long line of artists who critically analyze the same emblem and the question of “What does it mean to be American?” His sculpted painting recalls the flag works of Jasper Johns and David Hammons but in differing ways and with different connections. *John's Flag* (1955) functioned as a conceptual tool to question what a painting is and how it differentiates itself from the object it represents, which aligns with Ramón Pérez's work that also contemplates the nature of painting. However, *Star Spangled* engages more closely with Hammons' *African American Flag* (1990) in the ways Hammons discusses the complexity of being othered (specifically being Black) in the United States. In a similar line of thinking, Ramón Pérez synthesizes the American flag with his personal and cultural subjectivity. His intentional choice of materials, particularly leather scraps sourced from his father's shop, fuses the resourcefulness of being Xicano into his reinterpretation of the American flag, while also highlighting the fragmentation that occurs when existing as a Brown person in America.





ESTEBAN RAMÓN PÉREZ

Star Spangled, 2019

leather, remnants of an American flag, boxing glove cotton interior, silk, acrylic, wood, brass

120 x 144 x 28 inches

304.8 x 365.8 x 71.1 cm

LM33784