



Dragon Crab and Turtle is pleased to present *Me Lllaman (They Call Me)*, Kiván Quiñones Beltrán's first solo exhibition in St. Louis, MO.

From a young age, Beltrán has felt the "frequency," be it through the drums, in the waves, shadows, and the sound of "emptiness" in the seashell. Something that hides and skulks, not because of fear, but because it yearns to bring him to the dark corners to exist in a place where there's only the "feel." In the "feel," there is the dance. This dance and movement leads to a gesture that creates a form of memory. When it merges with ancestral memory, a moment of trance comes to fruition to realize a sentient as it is, and Beltrán says to himself — "they call me."

Large-scale tapestries, which he calls portals, drape the gallery. They depict Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and West African photographic images of indigenous masks and figures on acrylic stained surfaces. Beltrán uses these images as a bridge between his hand's ancestral memory and the memory created in the present time. He adopted the markings of the *Nganga*; as a way to syncretize cultural elements and engage with water from the Atlantic as a material and subject matter. "My work is a ritual to connect with my ancestors. It's a dialog between forces. In these dialogs, the words are the gestures that have the finality of forming ancestral maps for me to use as a guide." His seashell phones allow him to communicate with the entities of this world because something inside of him is always calling him — He has to listen.

Kiván Quiñones Beltrán (b.1997) lives and works in Santurce, Puerto Rico. He realizes works from West African fabric, animal skulls, brooms, acrylic paint, oil paint, candles, chalk, sand, river dirt, seawater, oil pastels, and bed fitters, among many other elements from his ancestral and present self, to "Redefine the language of found objects to the point that we can use them as portals." He has held solo exhibitions at POP projects and Amor Fuego in Santurce, Puerto Rico and group exhibitions at Embajada, Publica, and km0.2 in San Juan.

Me Lllaman (They Call Me) will open Sunday, April 10th, 2022 — 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Please e-mail dragoncrabandturtle@gmail.com to make an appointment.