

**HOUSTON (MARCH 18, 2023)** — Foto Relevance is pleased to return to Chicago this April for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the EXPO CHICAGO art fair. We are thrilled to be exhibiting three showstopping artists. Foto Relevance’s booth will feature work by three contemporary female multimedia artists: Alia Ali, Daisy Patton, and Karen Navarro. Each deals with portraiture in distinctive ways, working at the crossroads of photography, painting, sculpture, and textile, as well as at the intersection of layered identities. The work transcends media and crosses borders, defying categorization. We hope that you will join us at Navy Pier in Chicago this April 14–16, with a VIP preview day on April 13, 2023.



Left to right: Daisy Patton, *Untitled (Pink and Magenta Woman with White and Gold Flowers)*, 2023;  
Alia Ali, *Minakshi*, 2022; Karen Navarro, *Sliced*, 2022

### **ABOUT THE ARTISTS:**

**Alia Ali's** photographic works see the artist camouflage her sitters in elaborately patterned fabrics. Concealing her subjects' identities in traditional (and often controversial) textiles, and thus anonymizing them, she exposes fraught global histories of colonialism, migration, and language through the richly colored, enigmatic images. Ali's work explores the myriad of connections which invisibly bind together pattern and textiles, linguistics and cartographies, peoples and expression, and shows that design cannot be divorced from context. She subverts the colonial gaze, presenting beauty rather than suffering, ancestral knowledge rather than contemporary trauma, empowerment of the

multiple rather than the reduction into a singular. In December 2021 at Art Basel in Miami, Ali was announced as an *Artsy Vanguard Artist*.

Influenced by collective and political histories, **Daisy Patton** explores storytelling and story-carrying, the meaning and social conventions of families, and what shapes living memory. Her work also examines in-between spaces and identities, including the fallibility of the body and the complexities of relationship and connection. In her series *Forgetting is so long*, Patton collects abandoned family photographs, enlarges them to life-size, and paints over them as a kind of re-enlivening, dislocating the individuals from their formerly static place and time. Each piece functions as an altar for the departed, a portal that fractures linear time, and a possibility for rich connection between the viewer and the painted subjects. Patton's work was selected among the top 100 standout works from Miami Art Fairs by Artsy in 2020.

**Karen Navarro's** uniquely deconstructed and reconstructed portraits of first, second and third generation American immigrants investigate a sense of belonging as influenced by race, migration, and the artist's own indigenous identity. By exploring her ancestral culture, and her experience as an American immigrant, she creates connections between a vast constellation of identities in the present time — connections which reinforce a vision of a more just future. The bold, sculptural works push beyond the boundaries of traditional photography and color usage, carving out new spaces of exploration of media and identity. Navarro's work has received critical acclaim in the US and abroad; she was shortlisted for the *Photo London Emerging Photographer of the Year Award 2020*.

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**Rosa Boshier González, Glasstire:**

*"There is something determined about [Alia] Ali's life-sized subjects, both anonymous and deeply pronounced in their poses, willfully seen and obscured at the same time. In their portraits they seem resolute in their illegibility, their bodies dead set on being articulated, yet refusing to be translated, maintaining a sovereignty that supersedes language."*

**James Steward, Princeton University Art Museum:**

*"politically potent and materially beautiful." (on Alia Ali's works)*

**Adèle Cassigneul, Independent Researcher:**

*"Photography and painting seem to be playing hide-and-seek, as joyful colors and motifs (un)veil the black-and-white canvas. Winding flowery garlands around bodies that stand still, Daisy [Patton] perpetuates being. The ornamental flora carries secret thoughts and emotions. It makes them visible and so unfolds a floral style that alludes to an interpretation of the soul's journey."*



**Patricia Restrepo, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston:**

*"The seriousness of [Karen] Navarro's formal and conceptual inquiries around the formation of identity, including who has agency over their own representation and what mediating forces are at play, is undeniable. Yet, her playful sensibility in rupturing of expected experience is poignant. Offering pops of neon colors, or precarious Jenga-esque sculptures experienced in the round, she introduces welcome levity and humor to this zeitgeist exploration of selfhood."*

**ABOUT THE FOTO RELEVANCE:**

Since 2016, Foto Relevance cofounders Geoffrey C. Koslov and Bryn Larsen have focused on the exhibition and acquisition of museum-quality, contemporary fine art photography and photography-based work. Joined by Suzanne Zeller in 2019 who currently leads the program as Assistant Director, Foto Relevance is dedicated to providing a platform for an innovative selection of American and international photographic artists pushing the boundaries of photography. In addition to promoting the work of artists, Foto Relevance provides guidance, educating individual collectors and corporations in the acquisition and sale of art. Foto Relevance is a member of the Houston Art Gallery Association (HAGA). The gallery is located in the historic Museum District in Houston, Texas in close proximity to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Menil Collection, and the Houston Center for Photography.

Foto Relevance is currently open for walk-in hours Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11 am - 5 pm, or by appointment. Please call (713) 505-1499 or email [info@fotorelevance.com](mailto:info@fotorelevance.com) for press and other inquiries.