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**Solo Exhibitions by William Atkinson and Sara Cardona  
Open at Erin Cluley Gallery November 20th**

[Dallas, Texas – November 8, 2021] **ERIN CLULEY GALLERY** is pleased to announce the concurrent exhibitions of two Dallas based artists **WILLIAM ATKINSON** and **SARA CARDONA**, both solo presentations being the artists' first with the gallery. The exhibitions will be on view November 20<sup>th</sup> through December 23<sup>rd</sup> at the gallery located in the Dallas Design District at 150 Manufacturing Street, Suite 210, with an opening reception on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 8 PM. Erin Cluley Gallery is open Wednesday through Saturday, 12 to 5 PM or by appointment.

For the better part of a decade, artist **WILLIAM ATKINSON** has been contemplating the concept of *Storm & Shelter* – the title of his upcoming solo exhibition. Believing “Storm” and “Shelter” as irreconcilable ideas which could not exist in the same space, Atkinson felt an internal dichotomy resulting in a creative roadblock. Atkinson states, “When embracing the storm; I thought I had to forgo the shelter. I was wrong.”

After years of reflection and revelations from his present life, Atkinson realized these terms are not an either/or but a both/and relationship – not a divergence but a convergence. His exhibition of large format mixed media on canvases is a representation of this realization and convergence. Though it may be a seemingly simple idea to the outside viewer, for the artist, it is a deeply personal discovery. The “Storm” needs the “Shelter” because they define each other – they are in fact *simpatico*. Convergence, rather than divergence, gives the artist resolution. The artist states, “Both concepts may coexist in the same space without judgment upon the other. It is a return to origin and evaluation of the weight of our decisions, either arbitrary or intentional, because both concepts are defining us. They merge. They coexist. They are in the same space — and I could not be happier.”

In this exhibition of all new work, *Storm & Shelter* is a continuation of working with paint and collage on canvas while staying true to his roots in street art. The new works combine a language of abstract expressionism, re-appropriation of imagery, typography, and graffiti with the intention of engaging the viewer so they may draw their own conclusions on the topic. The creative energy of each piece is intended to be both an external dialogue and an internal reflective moment.

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*Vas A Ver* is a cheeky Spanish admonition, much like the English “you’ll see...”. Often used as a way to remind someone things might not turn out as expected, the phrase is also a play on words – as in – to actually see things in a new way.

During the past year, **SARA CARDONA** spent the time of pandemic isolation walking the streets of her neighborhood for energy and solace. In these moments, she came to observe the daily nuances, rapid gentrification, and changes to her immediate surroundings on a micro scale.

The works in *Vas A Ver* reflect on the way a neighborhood speaks and who is there to listen. By using her own personal photographs of local graffiti, along with sourced images from local

magazines and material from daily “work from home” office supplies, the collages are homages to the energy of a neighborhood from the vantage point of a sci-fi omniscient narrator. The artist likes to think of the works as futuristic topographies of a quadrant of the universe: Oak Cliff, Texas.

The streets speak and the writing is on the wall. Who’s watching? Who’s listening? You’ll see, things won’t turn out quite the way they were planned.

***Cardona is also part of a two person exhibition running concurrently at Cluley Projects November 10 – December 11, 2021. Soft Veneers and Fresh Cycles is curated by Leslie Moody Castro and includes the work of Houston based Rabéa Ballin alongside Cardona. Cluley Projects is the new satellite space in West Dallas started by Erin Cluley Gallery in April 2021.***

### **About the Artists**

**WILLIAM ATKINSON** started his professional career as a police officer in the city of Gunnison, CO. This afforded him opportunities for community engagement and education. In this capacity, Atkinson was afforded the privilege of training and focused on areas of drug education, alcohol education, resident advisor training and orientation, the community police academy, and guest teaching for a college level sociology class. In 2007, Atkinson was recruited from the police department to be a lead instructor for a program of record with the United States Military and personally taught over 10,000 personnel.

After his work with the military was completed, Atkinson took the opportunity to work in the arts. He founded and operated a gallery and artist incubator in Los Angeles. This led to his becoming the operations director for two internationally renowned galleries in New York. Woven into his daily practice was education and mentorship – for artists, staff, clients – from topics ranging from the marketplace to emerging art forms.

In 2017, Atkinson returned home to Dallas and after reflecting on his career, he decided to return to his greatest joy – teaching. In pursuit of this goal, he re-enrolled at Southern Methodist University and earned his master’s degree in May of 2021. In the spring of 2021, he was hired by St. Mark’s School of Texas and has joined the faculty as a full-time 6th grade Humanities teacher.

He has shown his work throughout the U.S. and in Europe.

**SARA CARDONA** was born in Mexico City and currently lives and works in Dallas. She uses the analog process of cut-and-paste to create collages in the tradition of early twentieth century assemblage and in a nod to the editing process of film. These collages then become the foundation for large scale sculptures in paper and metal, which are inspired by the idea of distributive, human networks of capital and consumption. As an artist who grew up in a family involved in the film and theater industry, her work is informed by the intersection of artifice, spectacle, photography and scenic construction.

Her work has recently been exhibited in *Texas Women: A New History of Abstract Art* at The San Antonio Museum of Art, and in *The Nasher Public Window Series*. In February 2022, her work will be included in an extensive survey of female Texas artists at Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi. Her first public art commission, *Seeding the Trail*, can currently be experienced on The Katy Trail in Dallas through March 2022. Sara is a recipient of the 2020 Nasher Artist Grant and a past recipient of the Dallas Museum of Art Kimbrough Award, as well as a C3 Visiting Artist at the DMA. Sara studied at the Kansas City Art Institute, received her BA from UT Austin, her MFA from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, PA, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Skowhegan, ME.

# ERIN CLULEY GALLERY

## **About Erin Cluley Gallery**

Erin Cluley Gallery is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging, mid-career, and established artists from Dallas and the United States. The gallery presents a provocative program of artists working in both traditional and alternative forms including painting, sculpture, new media, photography, sculptural installation, and public intervention.

In 2014, Erin Cluley Gallery ignited a creative movement in West Dallas acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery has moved its operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas' Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

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