Two Spirits
Luis Carle & Gerardo Castro, Curated by Jo-El Lopez

Gerardo Castro, Ice Pop (detail), oil, crystal rhinestones, wallpaper, transfers on oil paper, 24x72, 2017

April 7 - May 26, 2018
Eleta J. Caldwell & Rodney M. Gilbert Memorial Gallery
73 Market Street, Newark

OPENING RECEPTION
April 7th, 2018
7pm - 10pm

GALLERY HOURS
Wednesday - Saturday
12pm - 6pm
and by appointment

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Gallery Aferro and Newark Arts are honoring the lives of two powerful and much-beloved Newark culture workers: Rodney Gilbert (July 27, 1967 - November 8, 2017) and Eleta J. Caldwell (June 13, 1945 – December 13, 2017). Ms. Caldwell was Mr. Gilbert’s teacher, and both were working artists passionately committed to cultural leadership in Newark, and to mentorship of the artistically inclined youth of the community. The new Memorial Gallery, located within Gallery Aferro’s downtown location at 73 Market Street, is an intimate space appropriate for visual arts exhibits, poetry readings, screenings, and other sorts of gatherings where people connect with ideas and each other. The gallery is a place to linger, and a place for remembering.
Though in Western tradition, gender is understood as male and female, many world cultures, especially Native American culture, do not have such a precise division. Instead there is provision for, movement back and forth between genders. “Two Spirits” refers not just to the two artists exhibiting, but also evokes a body simultaneously housing both a masculine and a feminine spirit. This exhibit is also inspired by the interplay between spirituality, activism, and queerness, as seen in the longing felt by many people of indigenous descent to connect to this earlier, lost heritage.

Borinquen artists Geraldo Castro and Luis Carle’s works evidence how the radical influences pop culture, including ongoing pushback and questioning of gender roles. Castro painting of visually masculine nude men adorned in feminine trappings juxtaposes roles and notions of traditional beauty. Photographer Luis Carle’s nostalgic imagery recorded gay life and activism in New York City in the early eighties, and revisiting this work now reminds us of the necessity of more activism, as we see what has changed and what has not.

These Two Spirits, and other men like them, take on an important role in the art community; they are healers, visionaries and valued for their balanced perception of existence and a way of being.

www.luiscarle.com
www.gerardocastroart.com

Luis Carle, Crowbar, East Village, NYC (detail), photography on metal, 8x10, 1994