

## "Gold" at the Bass Museum Explores Earth's Most Precious Metal

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By Carlos Suarez De Jesus

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Carlos Betancourt's *Amulet for Light*

Patricia Hernandez would like to sell you an island. Don't worry -- she's not another airhead celebrity realtor bidding for a

named "Bit Key," and for sale only with the digital bitcoin currency.

"My piece is an internet-based project exploring the signification of gold via crypto currency," explains the Miami artist. "I've created a virtual island based on the geocoordinates of a real island for sale off the coast of Florida."

Hernandez's reality-warping project is on display at the Bass Museum of Art as part of "Gold," an exhibit opening this weekend with painting, sculpture, video, photography, and installations exploring how the blue-chip commodity has been used throughout history and how it is referenced by contemporary artists today.

"This is a very special exhibition because it is our golden jubilee," says Jose Carlos Diaz, a Bass curator who designed the exhibit to celebrate the museum's 50th

birthday. "Gold is one of the most expensive mediums, yet artists continue to utilize and emulate gold in their work, often becoming modern-day alchemists."

Diaz, who has worked at the Tate Liverpool in England, has strong ties to Miami. He launched a nomadic curatorial project here called "Worm Hole Laboratory" in 2003 before pursuing a cultural history degree from the University of Liverpool.

"For 'Gold,' I wanted to offer a cross-generational approach to organizing this exhibit," says the curator. "I encountered many of the works on display during studio visits, at major art fairs and biennials."

Diaz updated works referencing the skyrocketing price of gold for this exhibit. "We have a digital work from Yucef Mehri

value of gold on Wall Street," he says. "[It] is updated every 30 seconds; depicts a collection of rare, gold pre-Colombian artifacts; and features the sound of dropping coins in it."

On view you'll also discover a gilded shovel by Robin Rhode resting atop a pile of coal dust. The piece references the South African region responsible for producing half the gold ever discovered along with the atrocities committed by those mining the material there. In all, 20 international artists will have gold-themed works on display .

"'Gold' examines how the metal has been used in contemporary art and explores its future, both conceptually and as a material," Diaz adds.

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