

**NICOLA
VASSELL**

Opening May 1, 6–8 pm
May 1 — July 25, 2025

CHE LOVELACE

Where The I Settles



Gallery Hours

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am–6 pm

138 10th Ave. New York, NY 10011

For Press Inquiries

For press inquiries, please reach out to the team at [ALMA](#).

NICOLA VASSELL

Nicola Vassell is pleased to present *Where the I Settles*, an exhibition of new and recent work by Che Lovelace, the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Across a group of multi-paneled paintings, the exhibition radically expands his exploration into the relationship between nature and society in his native Trinidad. Lovelace attends to the many ways that these worlds contrast with one another before eventually reaching a state of unity, which he expresses above all through the act of painting itself.

A primary focus in Lovelace's work has been both the vibrancy and specificity of life in Trinidad, a place where local history, custom and ritual exists alongside, and in constant dialogue with its post-colonial identity. Whether depicting the flora and fauna of its forests and coasts, or the urban sprawl of its built environment, Lovelace renders each form and every detail with descriptive complexity and formal ingenuity. Drawing inspiration as much from the rich history of Caribbean and Trinidadian art as he does from the legacy of Cubism, Lovelace is attuned to how these different histories create worlds that at first seem separate and distinct but which can ultimately be made to converge.

The fragmented yet unitary perspective that Lovelace identifies in the world of Trinidad is expressed not only by the paintings' subject matter, where elements of the landscape so often abut or collide with what is man-made, but most importantly through their very structure. He constructs these works by joining together individual panels, which he either paints separately or works on in tandem after their unification, sometimes over a period of several years. Each work contains the meeting of different registers of time and distinct responses to the world which are, in the end, brought into relation with one another, though without losing what makes them singular. Where the panels meet is where he navigates their moments of dissonance while also forging new points of connection, thus allowing the paintings to preserve a fragmentary perception of the world that expresses an understanding of how we experience it.

Where the I Settles presents a view of Trinidad and Tobago where its many realities and temporalities are allowed to coexist. In a departure from previous exhibitions that cohered around a single theme, here Lovelace is taking the whole of his native country as his subject, showing us the intermingling of its lush and natural abundance with an urban space of geometric form and kaleidoscopic color. Though local wildlife, native plant species and sections of street and architecture remain legible in these paintings, Lovelace regularly surrounds them with passages of painterly abstraction and richly textured surfaces that connect what is specific in these forms to what is poetic or metaphorical in them as well.

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The movement between abstraction and representation is essential for Lovelace, as he understands each approach not in competition with the other, but instead as two mutually reinforcing strategies for expressing the true character of a subject. Whether describing Port of Spain or the very substance of the cosmos itself, Lovelace always returns back to the ever-evolving spirit of Trinidad, a place his paintings allow us to see as multi-dimensional yet fundamentally interconnected.

About Che Lovelace

Che Lovelace (b. 1969, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago) lives and works in his lifelong home of Trinidad. He received a degree from l'École Régionale des Beaux-Arts de la Martinique and currently lectures at the University of the West Indies Creative Arts Campus. In 2025, he was awarded the French National Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier).

Rooted in the outskirts of Port of Spain, Lovelace considers Trinidad his ultimate subject. The flora, fauna and figures of island life are ever-present in his tropical vistas, painted on board panels which he assembles into larger segmented works. Lovelace's vibrant, energetic compositions present a nuanced exploration of postcolonial identity, grounded in a deep commitment to the Caribbean landscape and its community.

Solo exhibitions include *Where The I Settles*, Nicola Vassell Gallery, New York (2025); *Nightscares with Palms and Egrets*, Various Small Fires, Dallas (2023); *Day Always Comes*, Corvi-Mora, London (2023) and *Cugoano250*, St. James's Piccadilly Church, London (2023). Group exhibitions include *Surrealism and Us: Caribbean and African Diasporic Artists since 1940*, The Modern, Fort Worth, Texas (2024) and *Soulscapes*, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London (2024). Lovelace's work is held in the collections of The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, The Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, X Museum, the Aïshti Foundation and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

About Nicola Vassell Gallery

Nicola Vassell is a contemporary art gallery committed to discourse that widens the lens of the history and future of art. Its focus is on developing an intergenerational, cross-disciplinary program of international artists and thinkers.

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