VIK MUNIZ
BRUSHSTROKES
05.14–06.20.26

Sikkema Malloy Jenkins is pleased to present *Brushstrokes*, a solo exhibition by Vik Muniz, on view from May 14 through June 20, 2026. The gallery will host a public reception with the artist on Thursday, May 14, from 6–8pm.

Vik Muniz is globally renowned for his series recreating popular and art historical imagery using unorthodox source materials—chocolate, sugar, scraps of paper, and junk, among a range of unexpected media. His practice engages the act of looking as a site of physical and symbolic experience, where the presumed nature of an artwork can be thrillingly destabilized. In *Brushstrokes*, Muniz presents a vibrant homage to the pictorial language of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painters. The works in this series are created from distinct strokes of paint that are photographed, cut out, and arranged into compositions after artists such as Paul Cézanne, Joaquín Sorolla, Vincent van Gogh, and Edouard Vuillard. These artists proposed new ways of seeing the world, realized through sensorial expressions of color, medium, and light. Drawing on this history, Muniz embraces the ambiguities of material (re)creation as a source of visual experimentation and discovery.

The process of creating the works in *Brushstrokes* involved a complex negotiation of physical gesture and digital mediation. To ensure the faithfulness of the recreation, each brush stroke had to be lit, photographed, and positioned in relation to the original painting's directional light. The result is a rich syntax of color that conveys an illusion of dimensionality while cohering into images of landscapes, still lifes, and figurative subjects. By deconstructing the material identity of painting and reproducing its most fundamental unit, Muniz foregrounds the potential of each brushstroke to exist both as an autonomous gesture and as part of a larger whole. For viewers, this fidelity of construction and fabrication of presence work in tandem—capturing attention, triggering associations, and shaping how each individual understands an image in relation to their own self.

Brushstrokes invites consideration of the function of painting in history and memory, and within our increasingly mediated visual world. For Muniz, ideas of "image" and "medium" are neither inextricable nor bound to a singular truth; rather, they offer empirical entry points into an ever-expanding process of perception and interpretation. With deep reverence for past and future artistic revolutions, *Brushstrokes* playfully meditates on the slipperiness of reality and the enduring valence of representation.

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Vik Muniz was born in 1961 in Sao Paulo, Brazil. His work is currently featured in the major retrospective *Vik Muniz: A Olho Nu*, on view at Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, and previously exhibited at Museu de Arte Contemporânea Bahia, Salvador (2025-26) and Instituto Ricardo Brennand, Recife (2025). Other notable solo exhibitions include *Vik Muniz: Extra-Ordinary* at the New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, Connecticut (2024-25); *Flora Industrialis* at Museo Universidad de Navarra, Spain (2023-24); and *Vik Muniz* at Museo Universidad Navarra, Pamplona, Spain (2020-21). In 2016, his public art installation *Perfect Strangers*, commissioned by MTA Arts & Design, opened at the 72nd Street Station in New York City. Muniz's work is included in the public collections of Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Tate Modern, London.

Muniz is involved in social projects that use art-making as a force for change. Muniz's work with a group of *catadores*— pickers of recyclable materials—in Brazil was the subject of the Academy Award-nominated documentary film *Waste Land* (2010). In recognition of his contributions to education and social development, Muniz was named a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador in 2011. Muniz is the founder of Escola Vidigal, a school of art and technology serving children 4 to 8 years old at the favela Vidigal in Rio de Janeiro.

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