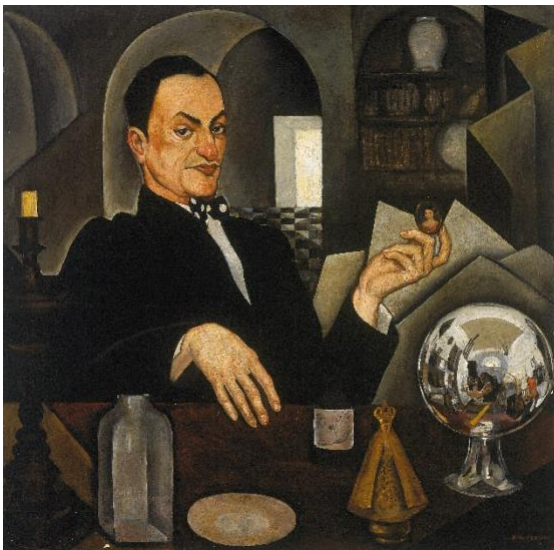


TWO EXHIBITIONS OPENING THIS FALL AT
WRIGHTWOOD 659 IN CHICAGO
October 1 – December 17, 2022

- *The First Homosexuals: Global Depictions of a New Identity, 1869-1930*
- *Michiko Itatani: Celestial Stage*

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| WHERE | Wrightwood 659, 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614 |
| WHEN | Fridays and Saturdays, October 1 — December 17, 2022 |
| MEDIA PREVIEW | Thursday, September 29 at 10AM |



The First Homosexuals: Global Depictions of a New Identity, 1869-1930

The First Homosexuals: Global Depictions of a New Identity, 1869-1930 takes as its starting point the year 1869, when the word “homosexual” was first coined in Europe, inaugurating the idea of same-sex desire as the basis for a new identity category. On view will be more than 100 paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, and film clips—drawn from public and private collections around the globe and including a number of national treasures which have never before been allowed to travel outside their countries. This groundbreaking exhibition offers the first multi-medium survey of the very first self-consciously queer art, exploring what the “first homosexuals” understood themselves to be, how dominant culture, in turn, understood them, and how the codes of representation they employed offer us previously unknown glimpses into the social and cultural meanings of same-

sex desire.

The First Homosexuals is being organized in two parts, due to COVID-related delays, with part one opening on October 1 with approximately 100 works, and on view only at Wrightwood 659. Three years from now, in 2025, 250 masterworks will be gathered at Wrightwood 659 for part two of *The First Homosexuals* in an exhibition which will travel internationally and be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue.

The exhibition is being developed by a team of 23 international scholars led by art historian Jonathan D. Katz, Professor of Practice in the History of Art and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, with associate curator Johnny Willis.



Michiko Itatani: Celestial Stage

Michiko Itatani: Celestial Stage celebrates the work of Chicago-based American artist Michiko Itatani (b. 1948, Osaka, Japan) who has grappled with the mysteries of the universe in her work throughout her prolific career. Professor Emeritus at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she taught for 40 years, Itatani is represented in the permanent collections of public museums around the world, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art (MACBA), Spain; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea; Olympic Museum, Lausanne, Switzerland; and the U.S. Embassy Brasilia, Brazil, among many others. With some 50 works, including paintings and drawings, *Celestial Stage* highlights Itatani's prop-filled paintings—populated

with invented devices which acknowledge the human desire to reach beyond one's capacity to "know the unknown." Her visual vocabulary includes particles, molecules, tesseract, stars, planets, orbital rings, rockets, control panels, quantum computers, and black holes which mingle with helix staircases, libraries, globes, pianos, harps and chandeliers—symbols for the hallmarks of humanity and culture. *Michiko Itatani: Celestial Stage* deconstructs the artist's paintings into the fundamental components which have occupied the entire span of her life's work. Encompassing two floors, the survey includes a wide range of works, from paintings produced early in her practice to a selection of new work exhibited for the first time.

These exhibitions are presented by Alphawood Exhibitions at Wrightwood 659.

Hours of Operation

Fridays 12–7pm

Saturdays 10am–5pm

Tickets

Tickets for the exhibition will be \$15 and available online only, beginning September 8, 2022, at

<https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>. Please note, admission is by advance ticket only. Walk-ups are not permitted.

COVID-19 Response

We require all staff and guests to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. **Visitors will be required to show proof of vaccination and booster prior to admission to Wrightwood 659.** Proof of vaccine and booster can be your official vaccine card or a photo of the card, along with a matching photo ID. Any individual who does not meet these requirements will not be permitted to enter the building. Children who are not fully vaccinated or who are ineligible for vaccination cannot be admitted to the building.

Masks will continue to be required throughout the gallery. <https://wrightwood659.org/terms-and-conditions/health-safety/>.

About Wrightwood 659

Wrightwood 659 is a private, non-collecting institution devoted to socially engaged art and to architecture. Located at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, the intimate space officially opened in late 2018 and hosts public exhibitions in the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. Wrightwood 659 was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light. For additional information: <https://wrightwood659.org>.

About Alphawood Exhibitions

Alphawood Exhibitions is an affiliate of Alphawood Foundation, a Chicago-based, grant-making private foundation working for an equitable, just, and humane society.

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Image Credits

Image 1: Roberto Montenegro (1887 – 1968), *Retrato de un anticuario o Retrato de Chucho Reyes y autorretrato, 1926*, oil on canvas, 102.5 x 102.5 cm (unframed), Colección Pérez Simón, Mexico, © Arturo Piera

Image 2: "Collection Sol III" painting from *Celestial Maze 22-B-1*, Michiko Itatani, 2022, 78" x96," oil on canvas, courtesy of Michiko Itatani