“Hólo—it xistz” marks the first solo museum project for Eric-Paul Riege. Working across media, with an emphasis on woven sculpture, wearable art, and durational performance, Riege explores the worldview fostered by Diné, or Navajo, philosophy and its bearing on everyday experience.

For “Hólo—it xistz,” Riege has produced a group of weavings that use myth and storytelling to propose spaces of refuge. In the Diné language, hólo means “to exist.” For Riege, these weavings, which pay homage and link him to generations of women weavers in his family, exist as living things that aid him in generating sanctuary spaces. Hanging from looms, the weavings create an immersive and charged space influenced by ceremonial sites and dwellings, such as the traditional hogan made of logs and mud. Riege has also produced a piece of regalia that he will wear during durational performances scheduled throughout the run of the show.

This exhibition is organized by ICA Miami and curated by Gean Moreno, Curator of Programs. This exhibition is presented in the Ray Ellen and Allan Yarkin Gallery, ICA Miami’s space dedicated to providing a platform for emerging and under-recognized artists from around the world early in their careers.
Eric-Paul Riege (Diné) (b. 1994, Na'nízhoozhí, Gallup, New Mexico) holds a BFA from the University of New Mexico. His work has been exhibited in the SITElines.2018 Biennial at Site Santa Fe.

Riege is the son of a Navajo mother and a father from Ohio. “I grew up in Gallup, where there’s a dichotomy of traditional craft and lifestyles versus the downtown area that is all run by non-Native shop owners. So there’s this dual idea of identity, and being half-white and half-Navajo — that’s what I’ve dealt with.

In Riege’s own words, “My hands are inherited from the Holy People, my ancestors, and my family and gifted me my talent and love for creating. As a child I think it was just a curiosity of experimenting and learning how to use material...I was thinking the other day that I am crafting my own God through my work and my pleasures and that the work itself is becoming my religion (my bible), and when I make I am praying to this God.”
Riege uses weaving techniques passed down from his great grandmother to grandmother to mother to him.

Each weaving project, accompanied by a ritual dance, is thought of as a moment of story telling and truth revealing.

Riege fully distinguishes his performance from Diné ceremony. “Those we keep for ourselves and for our own people and for our own blessings. Those we cannot share, as Diné people.”

Much of the regalia created and worn by Riege is meant to embody an animal, entity, deity or sometimes concept.

Since 2015, EPR addresses concepts like stories of ancient myth, what home (and by nature of that, displacement from home) can mean and the current continuous struggle of indigenous peoples to hold onto their culture in the face of colonization.
Anthropologists believe the Navajos probably arrived in the Southwest between 800 and 1,000 years ago, crossing the Bering Strait land bridge and traveling south.

The Navajo people call themselves Dine', literally meaning "The People." The Dine' speak about their arrival on the earth as a part of their story on the creation.

The Navajo are believed to have learned the rudiments of agriculture after arriving in the Four Corners area. They became acquainted with domesticated livestock after contact with the Spanish, taking on shepherding and horsemanship.

The Navajo Nation is the largest Indian reservation in the United States, comprising about 16 million acres, or about 25,000 square miles, approximately the size of the state of West Virginia.
Spider Woman appears in the mythology of several Native American tribes, including the Navajo, Keresan, and Hopi. In most cases, she is associated with the emergence of life on earth. She helps humans by teaching them survival skills.

Spider Woman also teaches the Navajos the art of weaving. Before weavers sit down at the loom, they often rub their hands in spider webs to absorb the wisdom and skill of Spider Woman.
ERIC - PAUL RIEGE: HÓLÓ—IT XISTZ


Photo: Fredrik Nilsen Studio
Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami

Free Admission Every Day
Tues–Sun, 11am–7pm
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