

Franklin White: An American in Venezuela

# FRANKLIN WHITE AN AMERICAN IN VENEZUELA

ALPER INITIATIVE FOR WASHINGTON ART

American University Museum



# FRANKLIN WHITE

# AN AMERICAN IN VENEZUELA

Curated by Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard

September 9 - December 10, 2023

American University Museum  
at the Katzen Arts Center

Washington, DC

ALPER INITIATIVE FOR WASHINGTON ART



## FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to re-introduce Franklin White to the Washington arts community. When I arrived here as a graduate painting student in 1973, White had already earned his BFA (1969) and MFA (1971) from Howard University and was an influential professor at the Corcoran School of Art. He had already shown at the Gallery Rebecca Cooper, and was a member of the Jefferson Place Gallery, which was an important hotbed of contemporary experimentation founded in the 1960s by the American University art faculty. Everybody knew Franklin White.



Franklin White: Up Close With My Art. Photo: Maria Rios.

Over the years, White continued to show in Washington, DC, while teaching at the Corcoran School of Art, and during his tenure there, he received a Senior Fulbright Scholarship to teach in Venezuela for a year. White began to visit there as often as he possibly could because he fell hard for the country, its culture, flora, and the exotic palette. In 2005, he finally packed up and moved his home and studio to a rural town in Venezuela, Santiago de Los Caballeros de Merida.

All of the works in this exhibition were done or begun in Venezuela before White moved back to Washington last year. How lucky we are to have him and his art back! These larger-than-life oil pastels on paper illuminate and inspire the viewer. Their beauty opens our eyes to the world around us, whether in Washington's inner-city or back in the lush gardens of Merida.

On behalf of the artists, friends, and supporters of the American University Museum, I must express my gratitude to Franklin White for allowing us to host his first show in Washington in twenty years. I am also grateful to Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard for adding "curator" to her list of job titles. Dr. Bernard is best known as a writer, educator, and a psychotherapist, and I know curating *Franklin White: An American in Venezuela* and conducting her thoughtful interview for this catalog made ample use of all her many talents.

Jack Rasmussen  
Director and Curator  
American University Museum  
at the Katzen Arts Center  
Washington, DC

Opposite: *Flora Blanca con Abeja*, (White Flower with a Bee), 2022. Oil pastel, 45 x 48 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.

## ARTIST STATEMENT



In the first half of my career, I initiated every painting with a complementary drawing study and have been known for the way I generously apply medium to my larger-than-life paintings. Eventually, as I started to use crayons exclusively, my drawings on paper have become more “painterly” in size and texture. In recent years, I have begun to approach my drawings as life-size “coloring books.” As I project the painting on the wall, beneath a large sheet of paper, I create, color, and paint in the colors I love. However, as I get closer to the edges, I cannot always stay in between the lines, and I find myself keeping the momentum going right off the page. It has become somewhat of a trademark. As I always say, “You can’t stop the gesture once it’s in motion, it has to end on its own, and once you commit to the movement of action, you have to follow it all the way through.”

– Franklin White

**Over the years, my work has been reflective of large oil pastels using acrylic paint and crayons to illuminate images that inspire me in everyday life.**

## CURATORIAL STATEMENT:

Franklin White is back and better than ever! For those of you who are unfamiliar with Franklin White, he would tell you that he's just an inner-city guy who loves to paint and travel and happened to fall in love with a little city in Venezuela called Merida. To me, he is "*Inspiration Personified!*" My experience with Franklin White dates to the 1970's where I would travel during the summer from Richmond, VA to Washington, D.C. to spend a few days with my favorite uncle. Over the years, I have fond memories of receiving generous Christmas gifts, listening to his stories, and marveling at his travel experiences and career accomplishments. My cousins and I would often brag about our famous uncle; but I can say with full candor that I don't think I fully grasped how accurate we were. For me, there was just something about the way he embraced life, pursued his art, and remained committed to his friends and family. Simply put, his life and his work spurred-on my inner creativity and provided a beacon for my personal and professional aspirations.

Shortly after his return from Merida about two years ago, Franklin expressed interest in showing his works at the American University Museum; but since he had not shown his works formally in the United States in 20 years, he wasn't sure if it was possible. At the same time, unbeknownst to him, I was silently dreaming up ways to show my appreciation for his life and legacy and had been preparing to either write his autobiography or tell the world about his travels in Venezuela. In December of 2022, while preparing our annual Christmas dinner, his storytelling turned into an interview, and the books began to take shape.

Several weeks later, he received the invitation from the American University Museum to put on a show! He shared the news immediately and, with profound excitement, decided this would be an excellent way to share how Merida, Venezuela changed his life! We both laughed, and I reminded him about how great things happen, "*When You Put It Out into The Universe!*"

Curating this exhibition has been a project of inspiration, admiration, and love for my dear Uncle Frankie!!

– Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard

# LIVING IN COLOR: A TRAVELER'S REFLECTION

With Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard

**Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard:** Franklin, you have been painting for more than 60 years and mentioned the invitation to show your work at the American University Museum serves a dual purpose, as it allows you to retrospectively share your 20-year relationship with Merida, Venezuela, and it re-introduces you to the arts community. In a few words, can you please re-introduce yourself?

**Franklin White:** Well, Franklin White is an educator, a brother, an uncle, and more than anything else, an artist. I've been painting, drawing, and participating in shows and exhibits for more than six decades or at least as long as I can remember. I am an inner-city guy who happened to fall in love with a rural town in Venezuela. In 2001, I received a Senior Fulbright Scholarship to teach in Venezuela at the Armando Reverón School. Upon arrival, I became immersed with the culture and began photographing everything I saw. I noticed there were tropical-like plants, foliage, and flowers everywhere, just growing wild in the woods, on telephone poles, up through the sidewalk, and even on the sides of houses. The area was exotic

to me, and I felt as though I was in paradise.

**Dr. Bernard:** This is your first American exhibition in 20 years, I would imagine a great deal has changed since your last show in the United States. What have you noticed as the biggest change from your earlier exhibitions in the 70s, 80s, and 90s?

**Franklin:** Early in my career, I was never really into the details of the exhibition process. Back in the day when I showed my works at the Rebecca Cooper Gallery, Jefferson Place Gallery, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, and other places such as those, I primarily focused on having the works ready. I have a fond memory from an exhibition where the installation crew had to hang a painting wet because I was determined to finish a key piece of work before the opening day. As I think of it now, not much has changed in that regard because my final piece for this exhibition was in its final stages of creation right before the installation deadline (smile). But I can say that one tremendous change I've noticed is regarding the growth of





*Dos Cobeas Campanas, (Two Wildflowers)*, 2014. Oil pastel, 21 x 31.25 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.



*Bromelias Tres*, 2012. Oil pastel, 23 x 30.75 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Maria Rios.



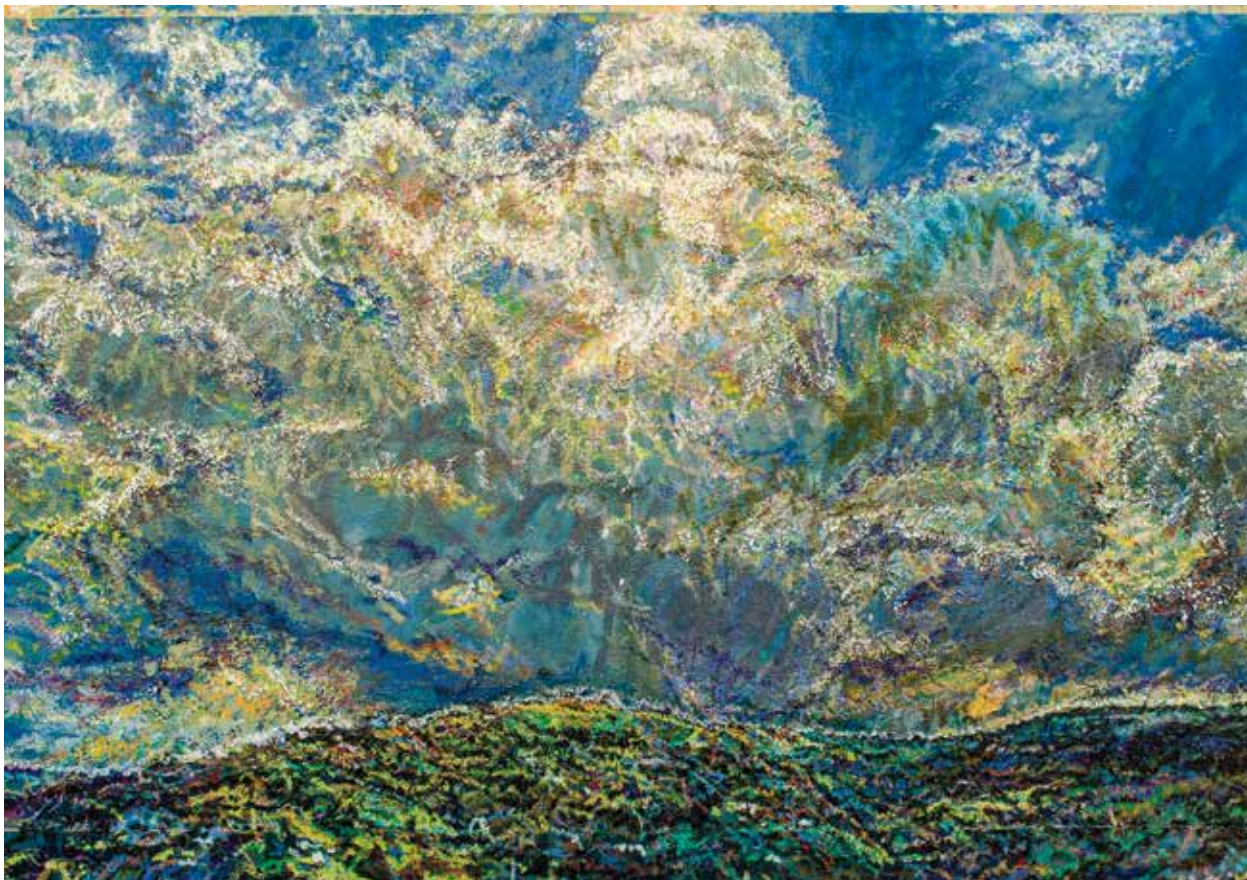
Clockwise, from top left: *Manzanas*, (Apples), 2002. Oil pastel, 30.75 x 45 in.; *Galax 7 x 1000*, (Gala Apples 7 x 1000), 2001. Oil pastel, 22.5 x 30.25 in.; *Naranjas, Manzanas y Toronjas*, (Oranges, Apples, and Grapefruits), 2004–2009. Oil pastel, 44.25 x 67.5 in. All courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photos: Camilo Paparoni.

technology and social media. There is so much more we can do to introduce and share art with the world and almost immediately.

**Dr. Bernard:** Does your exhibition, *An American in Venezuela: A Retrospective Exhibition by Franklin White*, tell us more about how the country inspired your work or did your experience living in a foreign country change your artistic expression?

**Franklin:** I would say a little bit of both. From the very beginning of my time in Venezuela starting in 2001, I was so inspired by the country, the natives, the food, and the scenery. I was able to see

beauty in that place through foreign eyes. Everything I saw ignited me from the inside out. The colors seemed brighter, the air smelled cleaner, and having the ability to paint outside on my apartment terrace made the colors more vivid to me. Up to that point, I had not worked outside in the natural light since my summer at Skowhegan School of Art in the 1960s. Merida simply made me feel alive around all those crayon colors in the natural light. I can now understand how Van Gogh and Cezanne called Provence, France their home and how Gauguin loved Tahiti. I feel the same about Merida, as it became my home, and I still miss it. Nothing feels quite the way it felt in Merida.



*Paisaje Dos, (Landscape [2])*, 2013. Oil pastel, 23.75 x 39.75 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Maria Rios.

**“I could never grow tired of this view. I’ve come to realize that I approach all of my paintings from a landscape perspective.”**

**Dr. Bernard:** What inspired you artistically while living in Merida, Venezuela?

**Franklin:** Never have I ever been so inspired than when living in Venezuela. I consider Venezuela an “enchanted land.” I was mesmerized by the tropical-like wildflowers and plants that I had never seen before. As an inner-city guy, I just

photographed everything that captured my attention. I gained inspiration while out on a morning jog, at festivals, or even just sitting in my apartment. I tried to always keep my camera with me. I loved the fact that the beautiful foliage, plants, and flowers grew in Merida wild, naturally, unmanicured, and untamed. For example, the *Alpinia Purpurata* and the *Alpinia*



Speciosa were wildflowers that I saw while jogging one morning. They were just everywhere, growing like wildflowers and in many varieties (pinks, reds, and whites). There were also other beautiful things that grabbed my attention. For example, a moth on the sidewalk and a beetle-like cockroach that came to visit me on my terrace. I thought to myself, “Even the bugs are beautiful,” and that cockroach just would not leave me alone, so it became art. And there the paintings *La Cucaracha* and the *La Tara* were born.

**Dr. Bernard:** You suggested that you had to leave Venezuela abruptly, and this caused you to leave a few paintings behind. How did this influence your preparation for this exhibition?

Clockwise, from top left: *Alpinia Purpurata*, (Red Ginger), 2014. Oil pastel, 20 x 26 in. Photo: Maria Rios.; *Alpinia de Speciosa*, (Alpinia Speciosa), 2013. Oil pastel, 20 x 25.75 in. Photo: Maria Rios.; *La Tara*, 2013. Oil pastel, 26 x 40.5 in. Photo: Camilo Paporoni.; *La Cucaracha*, (The Cockroach), 2013. Oil pastel, 20 x 26 in. Photo: Camilo Paporoni. All courtesy of Franklin White Studios.



From Left: *Flor de Riqui Riqui Uno*, (Riqui Riqui Flower [1]), 2013. Oil pastel, 20.5 x 25.75 in.; *Dos Aves del Paraiso*, (Two Birds of Paradise), 2023. Oil pastel, 59 x 72 in.; *La Vista Desde Mi Terraza*, (View from my Terrace [2]), 2023, Oil pastel, 59 x 80 in. All courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photos: Greg Stanley.

**“I never considered myself a landscape artist; but more and more I am feeling like one - especially after completing my first landscape in over 40 years, *Mi Vista de Terraza Dos* (View from My Terrace), which represents the freedom and beauty I was surrounded by in Merida.”**

**Franklin:** As a country, Venezuela experienced many political and economic challenges during my time there. As an American, I had to quickly adapt to their challenges and way of life. However, I found peace and solitude in their modest living style and in the simplest of things. Unfortunately, the time came where it was in my best interest to return to the United States permanently. So, I had little time to gather all of my things, and I knew the most important tool to be packed was my Sennelier crayons (smile). These crayons are my prized possession, and I’m finding that they are making fewer of the colors I love. I am secretly hoping that I can convince them to make some of my favorites, maybe a limited edition (smile). After I returned home, I tried several

times to retrieve the three very important paintings that were hallmark to my experience in Merida, the *Flora de Riqui Riqui*, the *Aves del Paraiso*, and the *La Vista Desde Mi Terraza*. However, I have been unsuccessful, and it is still too difficult to get them out of the country. Since I am no stranger to variation, I decided that I could easily recreate them and improve upon the work by approaching it in an entirely different way. After I received the invitation to show my works at the American University Museum, I decided to re-do them and make them better (smile). Thus, a new series was born, the “*Flora de Riqui Riqui Dos*,” the “*Dos Aves del Paraiso*,” and “*Vista de Mi Terraza (Dos)*.”



*Frailejón en Flor Siete* (Frailejon in Bloom [7]), 2011. Oil pastel, 19.5 x 30.25, Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Maria Rios.

**Dr. Bernard:** How would you describe your artistic approach, and how has your work evolved over the years?

**Franklin:** I believe my artistic approach has evolved in many ways; but in some ways old habits die hard. I have always used medium in a generous fashion. It is easy for me to pack on the color, whether I am using paint or crayons. The first *Frailejón* work I created is a particularly important work, as it is the first time I used a gloss medium in between colors, and it was also the first time I used metallic and florescent colors such as bronzes,

golds, and silvers because of the way the natural lighting reflected on the paper. Another evolution of sorts is the way I have begun to embrace my works more in terms of drawings than paintings. I noticed that I was starting to use many drawing techniques. I guess it is because for so many years, I taught drawing and painting at the Corcoran College of Art and Design, and I am still a student within my own work. However, with each new work, I am finding that the final product always reveals itself as more painterly, and I have grown to embrace that change as well.

**Dr. Bernard:** Tell me about your transition from acrylics to crayons.

**Franklin:** I mentioned earlier that I use to make a drawing study before every painting. I made a conscious decision to change this approach and only focus on drawings. After I decided that I would only do drawings, it opened a lot of creative opportunities for me, because there are certain things you can only do for a drawing study that you would not do for a painting. I had to trick my mind a little to allow those drawing techniques to translate into a more painting-like approach. I guess my mind was trying to still paint while the approach was more of a drawing technique. In tricking my mind, I had a lot of fun with the drawings, as I could erase, cover up, smudge, and adjust direction in the present moment. I would not have been able to do that with a traditional painting medium. I considered the change a very Gestalt process. As a therapist, I am sure you are aware of how freeing this process was (smile). It simply allowed me to make the drawings bigger, better, and more textured. Ultimately, the drawings became more and more painterly overtime.



Franklin White on his terrace in Venezuela and the crayons he loves.  
Photo: Maria Rios.

**Dr. Bernard:** You are commonly referred to as The Gringo Painter of *Frailejóns* in Merida, Venezuela, can you tell me more about how that name came to be?

**Franklin:** During my first trip to Merida in 1996, I went on a hike in the Paramo mountains, and for the first time I saw a flowering plant that I thought was so ugly and weird looking but beautiful at the same time. Later, after a return trip to DC, I learned that the name of this furry-like flower-plant was called the *Frailejón*. When I returned to Merida, I began photographing it and even went to the mountains again looking for it. I learned that the *Frailejón* only blooms in October



*Frailejón en Flor Cinco*, (Frailejón in Bloom [5]), 2010. Oil pastel, 19 x 30.5 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Maria Rios.

and in the cold, crisp air of the mountains. As my fascination and love of the plant grew, it inspired a whole series of *Frailejóns*, and now there are seven different *Frailejón* paintings in my studio. Quite frankly, the *Frailejóns* remind me of the sunflowers that Van Gogh painted. I found myself thinking, sunflowers are Van Gogh's and now the *Frailejóns* are mine.

**Dr. Bernard:** You mentioned that you are somewhat of a foodie. How does your love of travel and food influence your art?

**Franklin:** Yes, I am a bit of a foodie, and I love to cook. One of my favorite places to

dine in Venezuela was at a restaurant called Xinias. There were two chefs in the restaurant, a bit of a husband-and-wife team, Xinia Camacho and Peter Lauterbach. Peter played his harmonica, and Xinia would host several events in the restaurant such as cheese tastings and wine pairings. Xinia's food was another source of inspiration, because it was presented so well, it was almost too good to eat. After a lovely meal one evening, I had to photograph my meal and later decided to add three courses of the meal to my food series collections. I wanted to capture the way Xinia composed her plates with all the rich colors and spices. I felt like



the food placement, colors, and texture were works of art in and of themselves, like little “Still Lifes.” This collection is called “La Comieda de Xinia.” The three works I created were part of a five-course meal: (Soupa de tomate), a tomato soup with soft cheese surrounded by a basil gelatin, truffles, and cilantro garnish. (Pescado con zanahoria), fish and carrots with the edible flowers the green beans, radish, and celery, and (Helado con fresas, violeta y menta), a homemade vanilla ice cream with strawberries, chocolate, and berry sauces complemented with violets and mint leaves.

**Dr. Bernard:** I noticed that you have several different versions of the same flower, can you tell me why you decided to approach certain works in a series fashion?

**Franklin:** As I mentioned, some flowers fascinated me and others became my favorites, like the *Frailejón*. Sometimes, I decided to capture different qualities of a plant/flower, and sometimes, I wanted to share more about the environment around the subject. For example, with the Baston del Emperador, I did the first work on red paper to start. I wanted to use the red paper to see the minimum amount of drawing I could do to expose the flower. I concentrated on the background, the areas around the flower to expose the flower. I let the background do the work, and the background helped to reveal the bloom. However, the Baston del Emperador Dos



From the top: *Sopa de Tomate*, (Tomato Soup), 2014. Oil pastel, 24.25 x 29.75 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

*Pescado con Zanahoria*, (Fish with Carrots), 2013. Oil pastel, 20 x 26 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

*Helado con Fresas Violetas y Menta*, (Ice Cream with Chocolate, Strawberries, and Mint), 2014. Oil pastel, 23.25 x 29 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.



*Baston del Emperado Dos*, (Emperor's Walking Stick [2]), 2021. Oil pastel, 39.25 x 55.5 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.



*Baston del Emperado Uno*, (Emperor's Walking Stick [1]), 2014. Oil pastel, 26.25 x 27.25 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

was approached in a more expressionistic and gestural manner. I wanted the observer to get a sense of the environment and terrain around the flower. I also wanted observers to see what the flower looked like from up above.

**Dr. Bernard:** Many of your paintings seem to be of significant texture and size. What influences the size of each painting?

**Franklin:** I love doing big work. The bigger the better. I am a big fan of tennis, and sometimes I imagine I am playing a round of tennis, as my large drawings require me to engage in large sweeps and flows with the painting. I often feel like I am doing a good backhand and forehand motion to complete a line of expression. Painting is also very physical work, and I simply like the physicality of approaching a big painting. I like to attack it, while at the



*Bromelias Uno*, (Bromelias [1]), 2004-2014. Oil pastel, 60 x 83 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

same time being very descriptive and intentional in creating the image. Large works are also captivating when displayed! When I did an exhibition in Venezuela at the Tovar Museum, they wanted a large painting that was monumental and stood out. What I had in mind was to do a big *Frailejón* and one that justified the name that I had been affectionately given by the locals (The Gringo Painter of *Frailejóns*) However, it was the Bromelias that stole



*Flora Blanca con Abeja*, (White Flower with a Bee), 2022. Oil pastel, 45 x 48 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.

the show (pictured below). I would imagine the colors, size, and imagery made it appealing, and it hung well.

**Dr. Bernard:** Many of your paintings are becoming more textured with bits of crayons left into the painting, tell me about your philosophy behind this.

**Franklin:** As my drawings have become more painterly, I've begun to pack on so much material that the large drawings have started to reveal a painting-like quality and texture. My crayons would often get hot in the studio, and as I apply the medium, sometimes pieces of crayon break off onto one spot, and I either mash

it into the spot with my finger or use a palette knife. On many of my paintings you may even find a single fingerprint or two (smile). I see the pieces of crayons like little speed bumps, and the paper decides where the line starts and stops or what medium fills the void. I have grown to accept that my drawings have become more painterly. I initially had a hard time letting go of the distinction between my early traditional paintings and the more drawing approach I use. But now I love how the complementary drawing approach has a textured appearance and has given my works a new style that I have conceptualized as "Dibujo Pinturas" (Drawing Paintings).

**Dr. Bernard:** I noticed there are florescent undertones in some of your works, how do you decide to put this into a particular work and why?

**Franklin:** One of my favorite paintings is the *Dos Flora de Riqui Riqui*. There are lots of fluorescents, golds, and bronzes used in this painting. When I am using the golds and metallics, I feel that I am exposing the seductive nature of the flower. One thing I have learned is that you must be willing to work with them when you can, or sometimes, you must be willing to take them out altogether.

**Dr. Bernard:** Your approach and thought processes behind each painting is fascinating. Tell me more about your thought processes and how you stay focused during the creation of a painting.

**Franklin:** Before I start to paint, I must decide what use the color of paper will have and how I am going to use the color to expose the object. I love a challenge, and I like to set goals and solve problems. Now that I am home in the US finding sizable paper is not as much of a problem. However, when I was in Venezuela, I would run into challenges with acquiring the size of paper I needed, and sometimes, I would have to mend four or five pieces of paper together using paint to create the size I needed. The *Pavo Real* (Peacock) (pictured below) was the first time I had large enough paper to approach the work in the way I wanted to.

**Dr. Bernard:** How do you know when a painting is finished?

**Franklin:** I don't always know when a



*Flor de Riqui Riqui Dos, (Riqui Riqui Flower [2]),* 2023. Oil pastel, 45 x 82 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.



*Los Frailejóns, (A Bunch of Frailejóns),* 2021. Oil pastel, 56 x 88 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.



*Pavo Real*, (Peacock), 2022. Oil pastel, 45 x 92 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.

**“Sometimes my work is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, the more intricate the better.”**

painting is finished. I guess I know when I feel a sense of accomplishment, and there is nothing else to be done to the painting. But most importantly, I know I'm done when I feel the way I felt the first time I photographed the image, and it is then that I know the viewer will be able to understand what I saw and felt the first time I saw the image.

**Dr. Bernard:** Will this be your last exhibition of works based on your Venezuelan experience, and if so, what do you want your visitors to take away from the exhibition?

**Franklin:** I hope not! I am still painting every day, and I have more Venezuelan stories to tell and images to share!

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Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard, EdS, MA, LPC, is a writer, educator, and a psychotherapist. She is the Assistant Director of Counseling Services at a private college in Virginia. [www.mmwpllc.com](http://www.mmwpllc.com)

All quotes are excerpts from a series of interviews conducted with the artist at his studio from 2022-2023.

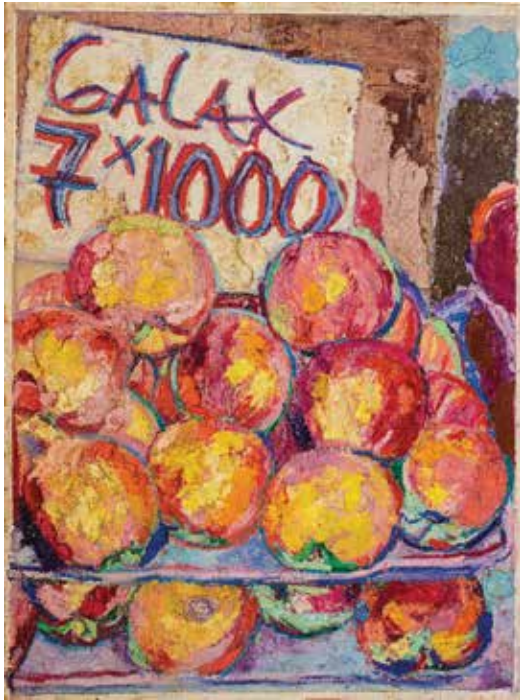
# FRANKLIN WHITE

# AN AMERICAN IN VENEZUELA



*Manzanas*, (Apples), 2002. Oil pastel, 30.75 x 45 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.





*Galax 7 x 1000*, (Gala Apples 7 x 1000), 2001. Oil pastel, 22.5 x 30.25 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.



*Naranjas, Manzanas y Toronjas*, (Oranges, Apples, and Grapefruits), 2004-2009. Oil pastel, 44.25 x 67.5 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.



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*Dos Cobeas Campanas*, (Two Wildflowers), 2014. Oil pastel, 21 x 31.25 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

Opposite: *Baston del Emperado Dos*, (Emperor's Walking Stick [2]), 2021. Oil pastel, 39.25 x 55.5 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.









*Los Frailejones, (A Bunch of Frailejóns)*,  
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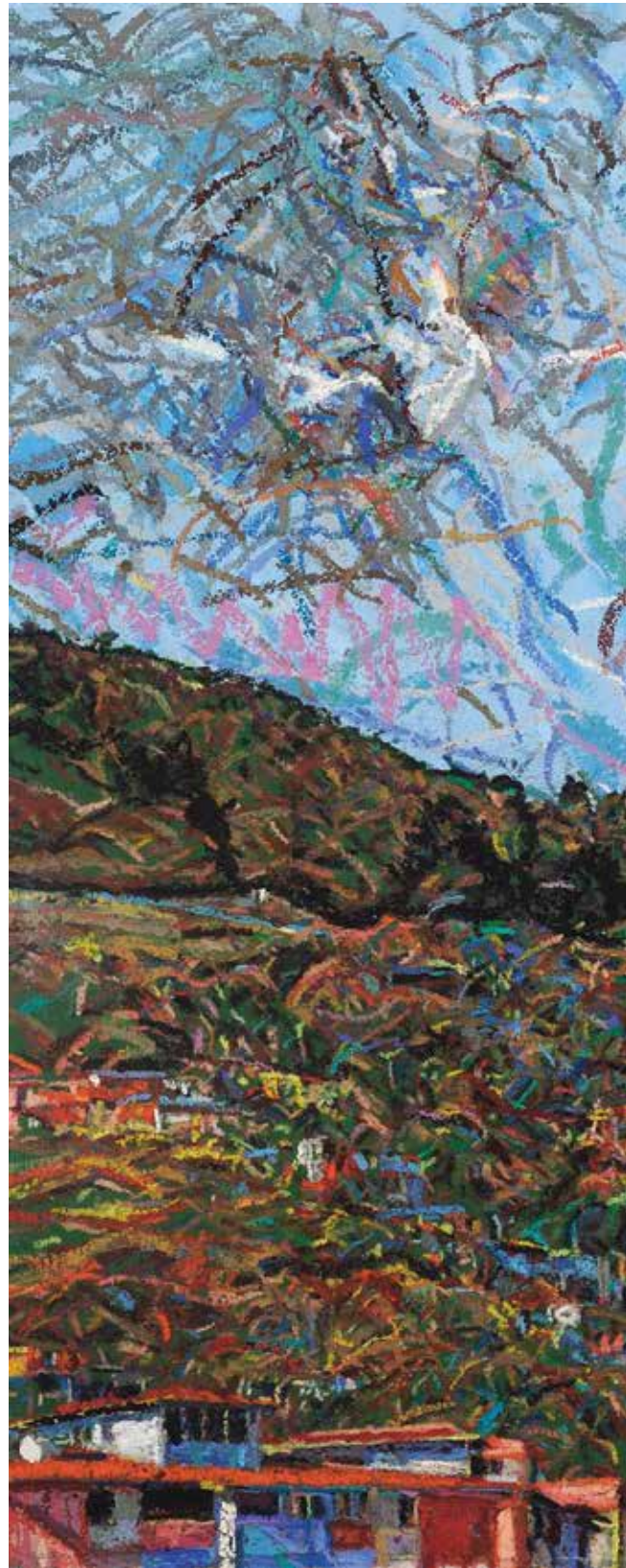




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*Paisaje Dos, (Landscape [2])*, 2013. Oil pastel, 23.75 x 39.75 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Maria Rios.



*La Vista Desde Mi Terraza Dos, (View from my Terrace [2])*, 2023, Oil pastel, 59 x 80 in. Courtesy of Franklin White Studios. Photo: Greg Stanley.





**FRANKLIN WHITE** was born in Richmond, Virginia. He began working as an artist from an early age, receiving awards for his watercolors while in high school. He studied art at Howard University where he obtained his BFA (1969) and MFA (1971). As a professional artist he has exhibited his work in numerous solo and group shows in many galleries and museums throughout the United States and in Venezuela. Mr. White is a retired professor of over 30 years at the Corcoran College of Art and Design. He also taught at the Maryland College of Art and Design and Georgetown University. Since his retirement he has been working and experimenting with different artistic mediums and has served as a juror for many art exhibits in the DC area. He was selected as a Liquitex Artist in 2005 and has traveled as a representative of the brand. He was the subject of "For the Love of Paint," an award-winning video that was screened at MOMA and was shown on PBS. His work was also highlighted in the documentary *Sport in Art*. This video was nominated for the Hometown USA Prize. Mr. White currently resides in Washington, DC.



Above: Franklin White paintings on his terrace.  
Photo: Maria Rios.  
Left: Franklin White. Photo: Camilo Paparoni.

## THANK YOU AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Michele Lee  
James Prince (in memoriam)  
Mark Edwards (in memoriam)  
David Elduayen  
Dr. Chantelle E. Bernard  
Sylvia B. Archer

**“YOU CAN’T STOP THE GESTURE  
ONCE IT’S IN MOTION, IT HAS TO  
END ON ITS OWN, AND ONCE YOU  
COMMIT TO THE MOVEMENT OF  
ACTION, YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW IT  
ALL THE WAY THROUGH.”**

# ALPER INITIATIVE

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Front cover: *La Vista Desde Mi Terraza Dos*, (View from my Terrace [2]),  
2023, Oil pastel, 59 x 80 in.

Back cover: *Flor de Riqui Riqui Uno*, (Riqui Riqui Flower [1]), 2013. Oil  
pastel, 20.5 x 25.75 in.

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# FOR WASHINGTON ART

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Alper Initiative for Washington Art promotes an understanding and appreciation of the art and artists of the Washington Metropolitan Area. We provide and staff a dedicated space located within the American University Museum, to present exhibitions, programs, and resources for the study and encouragement of our creative community.

