



ARTIST BIOS

Albert Alvarez

Albert Alvarez, born in 1983, is an artist from the Southeast side of the urban core of San Antonio. Raised in a tumultuous environment of "low-performing" schools in the 90s, Alvarez earned a huge scholarship to attend the Rhode Island School of Design and graduated with honors in 2006. Internally beckoned, Alvarez returned to San Antonio to rediscover his roots and unravel the incongruities of his cultural upbringing and new found ivy-league sophistication in his profound time spent on College Hill, Providence, RI.

Fernando Andrade

Fernando Andrade was born in 1987 in the border town of Acuña, Mexico. His family decided to move to San Antonio in 1994, a place where his parents and maternal grandparents felt was a good place for a better future. Andrade copes with the turmoil in his native homeland with two distinct bodies of work: figurative drawings and abstract paintings. While the drawings are narrative explorations of the events taking place, the paintings are vehicles for nurturing feelings of hopeful joy and optimism. In his figurative drawings, Andrade creates simple narratives based on stories he has heard about border violence. His drawings explore childhood memories and subjects of innocence. His abstract paintings, express a freedom from the anguish that underlies his figurative works. Working improvisationally, the artist creates organic compositions that are colorful and animated. Viewing his process as a kind of spiritual meditation, Andrade becomes free to imagine cosmic visions that have rhythmic affinities with music or dance, and which celebrate the splendor and preciousness of life itself.

Richard Armendariz

Richard Armendariz was born in 1969 in El Paso, Texas, and was raised on the U.S.-Mexico border, a region that heavily influenced his artistic, aesthetic, and conceptual ideas. Images that have cultural, biographical, and art historical references are carved and burned into the surface of the paintings, drawings, and prints. He moved to San Antonio to attend school and earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio (1994) and later his Master of Fine Arts from the University of Colorado at Boulder (1999). Armendariz is currently an Associate Professor of painting at The University of Texas at San Antonio. He has had numerous national and international exhibitions, and in 2013 was awarded an artist in Residency in Berlin, Germany.

Ruth Buentello

Ruth Leonela Buentello is based out of San Antonio. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008. Since graduating, she has stayed committed to exhibiting her work in group exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago, Self Help Graphics in Los Angeles, the Museo Alameda in San Antonio, the Slanguage Studio in Los Angeles, The University of Texas at San Antonio Fine Arts Gallery, Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, and Unit B Gallery in San Antonio. Her first solo exhibition was at the Southwest School of Arts in 2009. In 2009, Buentello, in collaboration with four like-minded artists, founded the Mas Rudas collective. Through Mas Rudas her work has evolved to explore the sociocultural examinations of Chican@ identity, cultural representations of gender, and the co-optation of Chican@/Tejan@/Latin@ history and culture. In 2010, she received an Artist Travel Grant from Artpace to study the art of

Nikki de Saint Phalle in Italy and France. In 2011, Buentello was chosen to participate in the Young Latino Artists 16 Thought Cloud Exhibition at Mexic-Arte Museum.

Juan de Dios Mora

Juan de Dios Mora has lived in the border town of Laredo, TX, where different cultures clash and yet expressions and emotions coalesce. However, here in the U.S., its traditions, racism, and stereotypes have introduced him to the reality of being an immigrant in a different country. Working representationally and sometimes with the surreal, he portrays images of the typical Mexican-American's life, iconography, and beliefs. His objective is to bring people together, with sentimental, satirical, sarcastic, and comical themes. He hopes to evoke self-awareness and then to superimpose that awareness on the experiences of life.

Joe De La Cruz

Joe De La Cruz's works depict the endangered landmarks and fading typography specific to the South Texas region and its residents. His images serve as nostalgic eulogies of practical relics, places and iconic indicators of identity and culture just before the inception of the digital age. De La Cruz was born and raised in San Antonio. His ancestors are from Guanajuato City, Guanajuato, but his family has lived in the South Texas region for three generations. He works as an established independent art preparator at various institutions in the region and has exhibited his work at the The McNay, Blue Star Contemporary, Rubio Gallery South and Flight Gallery. De La Cruz currently has a mural on the exterior wall of MexicArte Museum in Austin and freelances as a screenprinter in his community.

Jenelle Esparza

Jenelle Esparza is an artist originally from Corpus Christi, Texas. Though primarily a photographer, Esparza also works in multi-media installation and creates abstract photo-based pieces. She received her BFA in photography from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2010 and continues to exhibit annually. She was recently awarded the 2015 NALAC (National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures) Artist Grant for her project 'El Color de la Obra' on Mexican Americans in the South Texas cotton industry. She has exhibited nationally and currently manages her photography studio in San Antonio.

Ana Fernandez

Upon returning from Los Angeles, Ana Fernandez began drawing from her immediate surroundings to create enigmatic streetscapes in paintings and works on paper. Fernandez began her visual studies at San Antonio College and holds a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from UCLA. Ana has exhibited at the Institute of Texas Cultures, the McNay Art Museum, Women & Their Work Gallery and will be exhibiting in Los Angeles this Fall. Born in Corpus Christi and raised in San Antonio, Ana is also the founder and owner of Chamoy City Limits, San Antonio's #1 Raspa!

Yenifer Gaviña Franco

When Yenifer Gaviña was 17 years old, Alex Rubio, Artist-in-Residence and Mentor at Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum's MOSAIC After-School Program, recognized her talent and recruited her from the art department in Luther Burbank High School to join the program. In her paintings, Franco uses intimate compositions, dramatic light, expressive poses and a beautiful painting technique to create simple and unadorned scenes that speak volumes. Her work becomes a meditative process in which she analyzes issues of interest, emotions or situations. The sensibility and honesty of her work trigger a feeling of familiarity and empathy. Through the MOSAIC program she has had the opportunity to exhibit her work, participate in several collaborative public murals throughout San Antonio and begin to build a body of work. Franco recently received a full scholarship for the BFA program at the Southwest School of Art where she starts classes in the fall.

Raul Gonzalez

Raul Gonzalez is a full-time working artist who received his MFA in Painting from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2014. Gonzalez is originally from Houston, but has called San Antonio

home since 2012. He is married and spends his days as a full-time daddy. His studio practice includes drawing, painting, curating exhibitions, performance, and mentoring other artists. Gonzalez's work has been shown nationally in group exhibitions and is included in a number of collections including the McNay Art Museum and the National Museum of Mexican Art.

Mari Hernandez

An artist, arts advocate and educator based in San Antonio, Mari Hernandez is a graduate of The University of Texas at San Antonio and one of four founding members of the Chicana artist collective Más Rudas. Working mostly in the mediums of photography and printmaking, Hernandez explores issues of identity, personal narrative, and social circumstance through a Chicana Feminist lens. She currently works at Blue Star Contemporary, the first and longest-running venue for contemporary art in the city of San Antonio. Hernandez is a recent graduate of the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures Advocacy Leadership Institute.

Ernesto Ibanez

Ernesto Ibanez is a professional sculptor from Guadalajara, Mexico with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. He has been interested working not only on sculpture but also on painting. After completing his B.F.A. in 2010, Ibanez decided to move to San Antonio to join his family who had been living there for a few years. After establishing in the U.S. he has had the opportunity to participate in several art shows in San Antonio and Chicago. He enjoys using ordinary objects as inspiration of his work, raising his own view of things and using materials in a way that the work does not seem to be made of those materials and decontextualizing them from their own concept and function.

M. Guadalupe Marmolejo

M. Guadalupe Marmolejo was born in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico in 1958. Her family immigrated to Los Angeles when she was three years old. Traveling to Leon has always been a part of her life. These bonds to her hometown are a foundation of her identity. After a lengthy and successful career as a Creative Director in Hispanic Advertising Agencies in Los Angeles and Houston, Marmolejo moved to San Antonio in 2008 and focused her creative efforts solely on fine art. The *1/2 Kilo - Hecho a Mano* is a 21-piece suite of works. Inspired by the cultural shifts in the U.S., these relief prints use tortillas as the printing plates which are then adhered to antique photogravures. In addition, as part of the San Antonio Library Hispanic Heritage Month Art Exhibit, Marmolejo's digital works entitled "*Duplicity*" can be seen at The Tobin at Oakwell Library through November 7, 2016.

Tess Martinez

Born in the United Kingdom in 1977 to multi-cultural and military parents, Tess Martinez moved to San Antonio at an early age and has called it home ever since. Martinez attended the University of Texas at San Antonio, where she graduated Suma Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree (2005) and a minor in Art History. Faithful to film and the traditional photographic processes of the darkroom, she fluctuates between a 35mm, medium format, and large format camera. With a Black, Latino and Asian cultural background, her artwork tends to focus on emotional connotations to conventional predispositions as she continues to search for her disposition in society.

Destiny Mata

Destiny Mata is a Freelance Photographer/Videographer. Her photography is a product of her environment. Mata's work has been published and featured in Vice's Noisy, Vibe Magazine, The Source Magazine, Mass Appeal (Magazine), and Frank151. She has volunteered and worked with various non-profit organizations such as MIRA, part of the East River Park Coalition dedicated to that park and its surrounding community, volunteered at San Anto Cultural as an assistant photography teacher during their summer workshops, as well as interned at The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center. Mata has attended La Guardia Community College and San Antonio College with a focus in Photojournalism. She has recently exhibited her photography in a group exhibition at the Mexic-Arte Museum, Young Latino Artists 21: Amexican@ 2016. In 2014 Mata exhibited

photographs she took of the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy at the Museum of New York City Rising Waters: Photographs of Sandy Exhibition.

Arlene Mejorado

Arlene Mejorado is a photographer and multi-media artist from Los Angeles living and working in San Antonio. She is interested in the California-Texas connection and themes of migration, Diaspora, identity, and cultural hybridity. After earning a degree at the University of Texas at Austin, Mejorado pursued new challenges and artistic endeavors in, what she believes, is a thriving art and activist community in San Antonio. Her work intersects documentation, journalism and art through conceptual photography and documentary installation work, primarily in the public space.

Andrei Renteria

Andrei Renteria was born in 1986 in Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2015 and his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Sul Ross State University in 2010. Having grown up in Presidio, Texas, Renteria's work reflects his strong and longstanding interest in socio-political issues along the U.S. / Mexico border. Eager to expand his ideas, he has begun to oscillate between painting, printmaking (lithography), and sculpture in an attempt to address and embody broader political issues (including torture and violence) beyond international borders. Renteria realizes that there are parallels between division created by borders and that of discrimination, persecution, unlawful imprisonment and human rights abuses that continue unabated.

Daniela Riojas

Daniela Riojas is an interdisciplinary artist based out of San Antonio, specializing in performance, photography, video, installation, and music. Her work deals in issues concerning reconnection to indigeneity, ancient ritual, de-colonization, rediscovery of the matriarch, and investigation of the self; employing a performance approach she has coined as "individuation through embodiment." Riojas studied English-Creative Writing at The University of Texas at San Antonio and also attended the Vermont Studio Center Residency Program in Winter 2013. She is a Surdna Foundation grant recipient, a former artist-in-residence at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center through the Artist Lab Fellowship Program, and was awarded a grant for Media Arts from the City of San Antonio's Department of Arts & Culture through the Artist Foundation in 2015. Rioja's most recent performance *My Well, My Stream, The River*, was awarded "Best of CAM" for "most exceptional artwork" during Contemporary Art Month in 2016. She is the lead singer and composer for progressive, fusion band, *Femina X*. Her family migrated to Eagle Pass, TX from Monterrey, Guerrero, and Piedras Negras. Riojas is a first generation American citizen.

Jose Sotelo

Jose Sotelo was born in San Antonio. With a background in design, he started painting in 2006/2007. Sotelo is influenced by Mexican folk art, mandalas, and muralism to name a few. Both of his parents are of Mexican descent - his father is from Nuevo Laredo and his mother is from Mexico City. At the age of ten, his mother Leticia would take him on a trip to Mexico City that would dramatically influence his work as an adult.

Juan Zavala Castro

Juan Zavala-Castro is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the Southwest School of Art. Zavala-Castro is already gaining attention from teachers and staff. Earlier this year his work was shown in *Drawing II*, an exhibition curated by Vincent Valdez, at R Space. He was also recommended by the faculty to serve as a Student Instructor in Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum's MOSAIC program. Zavala-Castro is currently working with MOSAIC on a mural commissioned by the San Antonio College and preparing a series for another show at R Space in 2016.