

RUIZ-HEALY ART

Latinx, Latin America, & Texas Contemporary Art

Celia Álvarez Muñoz: Semejantes Personajes/Significant Personalities



Celia Álvarez Muñoz, *Chuck Ramirez*, 2002, Digital Holgas, 14 x 30 in, 35.6 x 76.2 cm

September 22, 2022, to October 22, 2022
201-A East Olmos Drive, San Antonio, TX 78212
Wednesday – Saturday
11 AM - 4 PM and by appointment

Ruiz-Healy Art is pleased to announce *Celia Álvarez Muñoz: Semejantes Personajes/Significant Personalities* in conjunction with FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA International Photography Festival. The exhibition will be a recreation of her 2002 exhibition at Blue Star Contemporary, San Antonio, TX which features a collection of forty-one portraits of San Antonio Latinx artists. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. In 2021, Álvarez Muñoz was awarded the Latinx Artist Fellowship, a groundbreaking initiative that recognizes 15 of the most compelling Latinx visual artists working in the United States today.

Celia Álvarez Muñoz: Semejantes Personajes/Significant Personalities opens on Thursday, September 22 from 6 to 8 pm. An artist talk will take place at the gallery on September 24th at 1:00 PM. To request high-resolution images and more information about this exhibition please contact the gallery at info@ruizhealyart.com or 210-804-2219.

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Four generations of San Antonio's own visual creators are the subject of Álvarez Muñoz's portraits. In the artist's own words "this collection of forty-one portraits of San Antonio Latino visual artists is, yet, another experiment: a courtship between old and new technologies, and old and new friends." For Álvarez Muñoz, the photography process and the distinctive medium of choice were significant. Álvarez Muñoz explains, "for *Semejantes Personajes*, I reached back to the Holga's unique, flexible and unpredictable format as the perfect tool. Kin to an imperfect, edited grainy movie film strip, it allowed to cease a moment, and was still open for inspection once it started a digital dialogue." Artists from the gallery roster, such as Chuck Ramirez, César Augusto Martínez, Ethel Shipton, and Jesse Amado are included in the portraits.

Born and raised in El Paso, TX, the artist spent significant time in San Antonio which provided her the opportunity to become familiar with the city's vibrant artistic community. She says, "Nowhere in Texas does such a community of Latino artists exist! The city dichotomously retains a small-town historical ambiance within the progressive economic expansion. These characteristics, I find well manifested in the work and personalities of this group of fellow artists." Additional artists featured in Álvarez Muñoz' portraits are Haydee Suescum, David Zamora Casas, Vincent Valdez, Leticia Huerta, Maricela Sanchez, and Rolando Briseño, among others. Since exhibiting the project in 2002, some of the artists like Mel Casas, Alberto Mijangos, Adan Hernandez, Chuck Ramirez, and Alex de Leon are no longer with us, underscoring the exhibition's commemorative tone.

About the Artist

Celia Álvarez Muñoz is a Mexican American conceptual multimedia artist who is known for her photography, painting, installations, and public art, as well as for her writing. She received a BA in Art & Art Education at The University of Texas, El Paso, and holds an MFA from North Texas State University (now the University of North Texas) in Denton. Born in El Paso, Texas, Álvarez Muñoz's work addresses the dichotomy of living between two cultures. Common themes in her practice include Catholicism, Mexican American experience, the past versus the present, and English versus Spanish language. The artist incorporates themes of family and "communal memories" in her pieces. She uses text and images in her work to explore the ambiguous signs and signifiers where cultures meet and to communicate stories of American history, culture, and society.

Her work has been exhibited widely in group exhibitions, such as the Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City, NY, and in solo presentations at the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Capp Street Project, San Francisco, CA; and the University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX. A career retrospective is scheduled for 2023 at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.

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Her work has been acquired by public collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, IL; and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston, TX. Muñoz's work was included in the invitational traveling exhibition *Our Journeys/Our Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement* by the Smithsonian Institution and *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960–1985*, among other exhibits.

About Ruiz-Healy Art

Founded in San Antonio, TX in 2006 Ruiz-Healy Art represents an international roster of artists and places emphasis on Latinx and Latin American artists, as well as working with prominent Texas-based artists. Biculturalism and identity discourse plays an important role in several of the artists that we collaborate with. In the spring of 2019, Ruiz-Healy Art opened a gallery space in the Upper East Side of New York City that works in tandem with the San Antonio gallery as a platform to disseminate the artist's work. The continuous investments in these underrepresented areas have remained a longstanding signature of the gallery program.