



RUIZ-HEALY ART

Latinx, Latin America, & Texas Contemporary Art

Ruiz-Healy Art is pleased to present *A Culture of Vertical Investigations*, a solo exhibition of works by artist Joan Fabian, opening on Wednesday, February 14th, with an opening reception from 6:00-8:00 PM. *A Culture of Vertical Investigations* will be on view at our San Antonio gallery through March 9th, 2024. The collection of works embodies a lifetime of personal reflection through ancestry, regions, and intimate struggles. This project was made possible with the generous support of the City of San Antonio's Department of Arts & Culture #GetCreativeSA.

Joan Fabian's art materializes from a lifelong search for belonging and what defines "home" in a multicultural world. Fabian's mother was seven years old when she arrived in America from a small village in Slovakia on the RMS Olympic, the older sister ship of the Titanic. Bravely armed by this experience, her mother instilled in the Fabian family the ability to adapt to different cultures. A variety of factors have influenced Fabian, but it is her time in Chicago's "Little Village" neighborhood that stands out, "We grew accustomed to the influx of the cultures of Mexico in addition to Eastern Slavic Europeans such as ourselves, and I became fascinated by culture and how others live." Despite being surrounded by various communities, all having their traditions and languages, Fabian finds that art is her language to investigate these unfamiliar worlds, "I put myself in places that brought me kinship with diverse cultures with appreciation."

The COVID-19 pandemic was a catalyst for Fabian to become reflective about her past and her future. This led to Fabian asking many questions, "When we go through a challenge, we investigate what we desire: a place to be safe in, where we live a better life. How does one make a home where there is turmoil and destruction?" Rather than being weighed down by the pandemic's loneliness, Fabian honored the places she traveled to, exploring and painting what it meant to her. From living in Pakistan to the Netherlands, the artist had a unique ritual when arriving at a new location, "The ritual, so to speak, is the acknowledgment of the lives that lived in the home I inhabit. I may find letters, history, and other traces of the former inhabitants. While in Delft, I found letters from an Indonesian writing home to his mother about his life in Holland. While making myself comfortable in a new home, I also inquire about the building, neighborhood, and local history of older residents. I would imagine how their day-to-day lives unfolded. Sometimes, I would even have dreams about meeting them. I never can know everything about them, but my imagination helped." To Fabian, memory is a system, a custom-made circuit board. How a person lives are choices made but predetermined by place, culture, and ancestry. One can visit and live for a time in another culture, absorbing the physical surroundings and how the environment places restrictions or freedom upon the individual to live a healthy life. Her art allows her to access and process information, filtering it through personal vocabulary for a universal audience.

About the Artist

Joan Fabian is a contemporary artist, designer, and cultural educator. She is interested in memory, culture, and human experience. She received her BFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her MFA at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Pakistan, where she taught painting at the National College of Arts in Lahore, Pakistan. Upon her return to the United States, Fabian formed a collective of Pakistani artists to promote discussion about contemporary art issues. This international collaboration was one of several that earned her a Puffin Foundation Award. Her work has been exhibited throughout the world, such as the Netherlands,



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France and in the United States at the Smithsonian International. She has completed two Dutch art residencies in Rotterdam and Delft. Fabian has received a Pollock Krasner Grant, in addition to various awards and honorariums. In 2011 she was a State of Texas 2-D Artist finalist. Fabian's public artwork "The Vibrant Village" was recently unveiled at the San Antonio City Tower.

About Ruiz-Healy Art

Founded in San Antonio, TX, in 2006, Ruiz-Healy Art represents an international roster of artists, emphasizing Latinx and Latin American artists and working with prominent Texas-based artists. Biculturalism and identity discourse are important in several artists we collaborate with. In the spring of 2019, we opened a gallery space in the Upper East Side of New York City that works in tandem with the gallery in San Antonio as a platform to disseminate the artist's work. The continuous investments in these under-represented areas have remained a longstanding signature of the gallery program. The gallery is recognized for its success in placing works by our artists in prestigious museum collections ranging from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the LA County Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, McNay Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and many others.