

February 19 - May 14, 2022

ART MEETS HISTORY:

Many Worlds Are Born

Curated by Ric Kasini Kadour & Alicia Inez Guzmán, PhD

“Millions of worlds are born, evolve, and pass away into nebulous, unmeasured skies; and there is still eternity. Time always.”

— Rudolfo Anaya

This exhibition takes a cue from the late Chicano writer Rudolfo Anaya, who is best known for his fictional, but still true, portrait of New Mexico, *Bless Me, Última*. The light, the land, the mysticism, and the people were all his subjects — kinfolk in a constellation that spanned generations. Along the same lines, the expansive content of this group exhibition also spans multiple generations and understandings of New Mexico’s many histories, worlds born from beauty, violence, and a deep sense of place.

Art Meets History at 516 ARTS spans two exhibitions: *Many Worlds Are Born* (February 19 – May 14, 2022) and *Technologies of the Spirit* (June 11 – September 3, 2022). Both are curated by Ric Kasini Kadour and Alicia Inez Guzmán, PhD, and are accompanied by a series of public conversations and activities that bring together historic content and contemporary art. The project, above all, looks at divergent understandings place through the prisms of kinship and conflict in New Mexico.

To develop the artworks on view, the artists engaged with the Albuquerque Museum Photography Archives, and many of them took part in Artist Lab: Art Meets History in New Mexico, an educational program offered by 516 ARTS and the national Art Meets History Initiative, in which participating artists were asked to examine personal and collective histories in New Mexico and the Southwest. In addition to the artists’ projects and installations across many mediums and contemporary art practices, a selection of the historic reference photographs from the Albuquerque Museum Photography Archives are on view.

ARTISTS:

Nikeshia Breeze

EveNSteve

Juanita J Lavadie

Joanna Keane Lopez

Diego Medina (*Piro-Manso-Tiwa*)

Margarita Paz-Pedro (*Laguna/Santa Clara Pueblo*)

Jeanna Penn

Marlena Robbins (*Dine*)

Leo Vicenti (*Jicarilla Apache*)

Nikeshia Breeze



Stages of Tectonic Blackness: Blackdom

Nikeshia Breeze, Miles Tokunow, Lazarus Nance Letcher, and MK
2021, Two-channel video 29:23

Full video: <https://vimeo.com/466734530>



Stages of Tectonic Blackness: Blackdom

Nikeshia Breeze's *Stages of Tectonic Blackness* is a collaborative performance project created with Miles Tokunow, Lazarus Nance Letcher, and cinematographer MK that includes land-based durational performance interventions, original music, a series of short films and direct community engagement with Queer, Black, and Indigenous peoples. This iteration centers around Blackdom, the first and only all-Black community founded in southern New Mexico in 1902. Envisioned as a Black utopia, Blackdom thrived for over 20 years, but was deserted by the 1930s due to racial tensions, lack of access to water, and drought.



Nikeshha Breeze

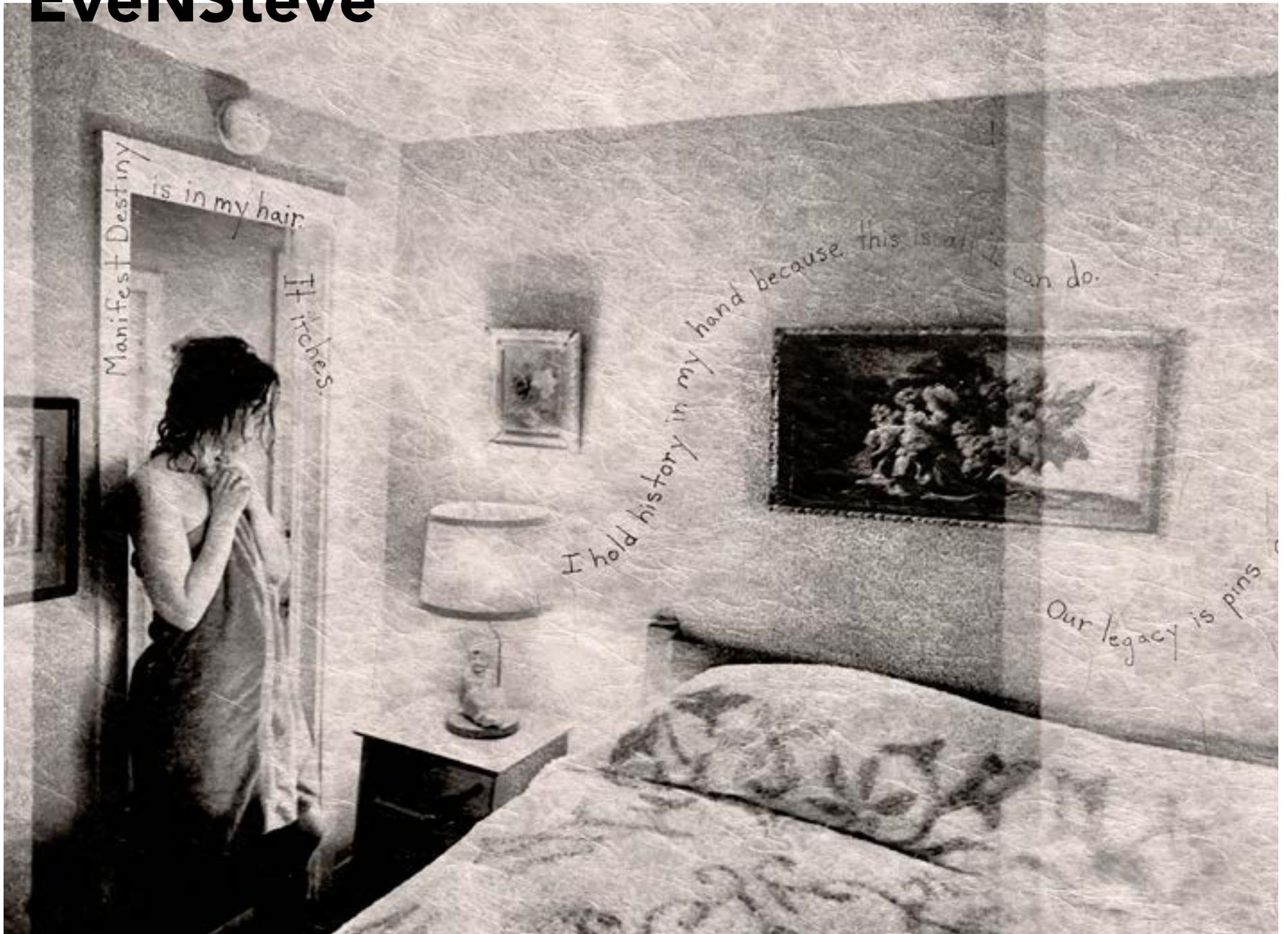


Bio:

Originally from Portland, Oregon, Nikeshha Breeze lives and works in the high desert of New Mexico. She is an American-born African Diaspora descendant of the Mende People of Sierra Leone and Assyrian-American immigrants from Iran. Nikeshha has shown work both nationally and internationally, at multiple museums, galleries, art fairs and in featured collections. Nikeshha's solo exhibition, "Four Sites of Return", was featured in American Art Collector, Hyperallergic, Metalsmith Magazine and The New York Times and is touring to institutions and museums in 2022, including the New Mexico State University Art Museum, January 21-March 5, 2022. At Art-Prize 2018, Nikeshha won the Three-Dimensional Juried Award and the Contemporary Black Arts Award for her sculptural installation, 108 Death Masks: A communal Prayer for Peace and Justice. In 2019, Nikeshha was invited to Ghana to work as a visiting artist on the historical Nymkimkym Installation of African History, created by international award-winning artist Kwame Acoto Bamfo.

www.nikeshabreeze.com

EveNSteve



Manifest + Destiny

is in my hair.

It itches.

I hold history in my hand because this is all I can do.

Our legacy is pins

The Blue Swallow

2022, In-camera collage on film with hand-written text, pigment on Japanese Kinwashi

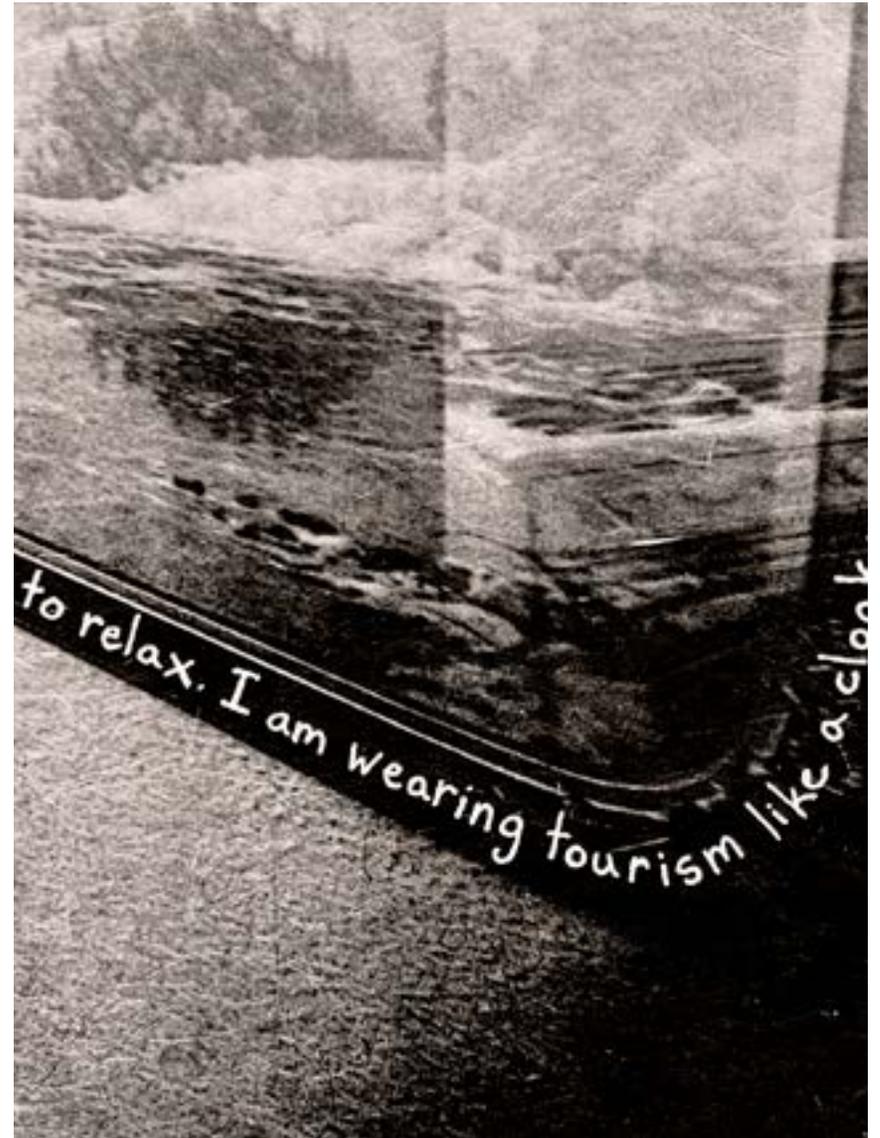


Additional video: <https://vimeo.com/661985769>

The Blue Swallow

In the monumental black-and-white photographic artwork, *The Blue Swallow* by EveNSteve, a historic hotel on old Route 66 in Tucumcari serves as the stage for a small drama about tourism and changing notions of whiteness in the Southwest. Questioning the practice of attracting tourists by celebrating unsavory aspects of history or glossing over conflict altogether, the artwork also challenges transplants to New Mexico, tourists, and white-identifying viewers to truly consider the lasting effects of colonization, racism, and Manifest Destiny on New Mexico.

The text gives voice to the solitary figure who is thinking about what it means to be a white tourist in New Mexico. One privilege of whiteness is the freedom to choose amnesia over memory, to deny history or accept it. The figure in *The Blue Swallow* wrestles with her options: to hold the history; to slip out of her skin; to perform guilt or shame; or to retreat into the cloak of tourism. In the end, she hands the choice to viewers like herself.



EveNSteve



Bio:

In 2019, Stephen and Eve O. Schaub formed EveNSteve and began collaborating on monumental artworks that incorporate both photographic imagery and hand-written text. In doing so they bring together their diverse strengths to create exciting new mixed-media works that incorporate a variety of disciplines: innovative film and digital photographic techniques, works on paper, collage, both creative and historical writing, and installation. The Schaub family live and work in Pawlet, Vermont.

www.evensteve.com

Juanita J Lavadie



Ciboleros & Comancheros: Four Personas of Spanish Colonial Shirts

2022, Handmade shirts, floor map, cart, and handbound journals



Ciboleros & Comancheros: Four Personas of Spanish Colonial Shirts

Ciboleros & Comancheros: Four Personas of Spanish Colonial Shirts by Juanita J. Lavadie comprises four hand-stitched traditional patterned wool shirts, each belonging to a Cibolero hunter or Comanchero merchant imagined by the artist. At the intersection of traditional craft and contemporary art, Lavadie's installation conjures a transformative period of trade during the 18th and 19th centuries, illustrating how contact between Indigenous peoples and settlers shaped New Mexican identity.

From the mid-1700s into the mid-1800s, settlers and descendent communities in Northern and Central New Mexico sent expeditions to the Comanchería to trade goods and hunt buffalo after the cosecha, or harvest, was completed. These traders were called Comancheros. In her installation, Lavadie presents four hand-stitched shirts, each of which represents a different persona in the expedition. Each shirt is accompanied by a journal that tells their story, offering an opportunity to reflect on the history of the Comancheros, the communities from which they came, and how they made their way through the world.

Today, the Comancheros are often romanticized and mythologized as heroic frontier men and women having adventures in the wilderness. Lost in this portrayal is the deep communal significance of these expeditions and how interdependent communities were with one another. Comanchero expeditions were the threads that stitched the Spanish and Indigenous people together.



Juanita J Lavadie



Bio:

“Stories and ballads of the Comanchero traders and Cibolero buffalo hunters, fired my childhood imagination to hear and read for more details. Later in years, I would be aware of depictions from various English language writers coming in from the East. Their publications were too often not flattering to the Hispanic villagers nor to the indigenous people of New Mexico. This conflict of archetypal depictions prompted me to search for books and publications, to visit various ethnographic museums, and to converse with various New Mexico historians on this theme. Today’s media is rife with issues of racial profiling, and the depiction of local cultures in Wild West television and movies still dominates archetypal images so that many of my youthful relatives who live in distant urban communities have no idea what their ancestors have had to deal with, improvising within communal aesthetics, just to survive.”

Juanita J. Lavadie is a fiber and graphics artist, a historian and educator from Taos, New Mexico. Since early childhood she was exposed to stories and traditions of skills and tools through her extended family of sheep ranchers and weavers of Northern New Mexico. Academic training led her to work as Assistant Museum Archivist in The Millicent Rogers Museum and the Harwood Museum, both in Taos. This assisted in her 1979 National Endowment of the Arts Apprenticeship Grant to study New Mexico Traditional Wool Processing, Weaving and Embroidery. She has published numerous articles on research and the historical fiction stories emerging from her background knowledge.

Joanna Keane Lopez



Lópezville, Socorro, New Mexico

2022, site-specific installation of adobe sculpture



Lópezville, Socorro, New Mexico

Among the assemblage in Joanna Keane Lopez's *Lópezville, Socorro* is a manta de techo, the dried stems of a chaparral or creosote bush, and at least four generations of remnants — glass bits, barbed wire, and old cans — evidence of past generations of Lopez family members who made their lives on the same sprawling plot of land. The artist's father gifted her one adobe house from Lópezville, part of a Spanish land grant awarded to 27 Socorro families in 1805, and now largely abandoned by most of the Lopez family. Much of what she brings into the gallery emblemizes that which has been left behind.

The manta de techo comes from the home of Lopez's great grandfather Abelino Lopez, who built the adobe around the turn of the century. The sheet hung beneath the ceiling, catching dirt that fell from the earthen roof. Lately, however, it's dangled from the rafters, forgotten. The chaparral comes from the wider landscape where it grows abundantly. It has been said by traditional healers to clean out the system from environmental toxins, a reality for those who've lived downwind from nuclear testing, as has been the case in Socorro. The artist brings both the remnants from the land, homes, and of lives lived into the gallery, along with adobe bricks crafted by hand from earth derived from Lópezville. *Lópezville, Socorro* asks viewers to contemplate the site as an axis of family memory and other histories of place, including the original presence of the Piro Pueblo of Teypana.



Joanna Keane Lopez



Bio:

Joanna Keane Lopez (b. Albuquerque, New Mexico) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work blurs the boundaries between contemporary sculpture and architecture through the medium of adobe mud. By working with materials of adobe architecture, earthen plaster and alíz (a clay slip paint) her work acts to address conceptions of sculpture in engagement with land. Through the passing down of knowledge of the vernacular architecture techniques of the greater Southwest, Joanna creates work that seeks healing and reparation of fragmentation towards land, home, family and community that is connected to her own multi-generational roots in New Mexico. Joanna is a grant recipient of the Fulcrum Fund of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and was included in Americans for the Arts-Public Art Year in Review Award. Her work has been exhibited at spaces including the National Hispanic Cultural Center Art Museum and The Momentary of the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. She has completed residencies at Ucross Foundation, Herekeke Arts Center and A-Z West.

www.joannakeanelopez.com

Diego Medina

(Piro-Manso-Tiwa)



long has the light wandered to lay itself upon you

2022, mixed media mural



long has the light wandered to lay itself upon you

There is the strata of the earth and the strata of time. And across these dimensions, countless feet pass — all travelers of a sort, some forcibly removed from ancestral lands and others following well-used trade routes. In *long has the light wandered to lay itself upon you*, Diego Medina — poet, artist and tribal historic preservation officer for the Piro-Manso-Tiwa tribe — evokes all of these histories as they unfold along El Camino Real, the Spanish Royal Road, the Rabbit Run Trail, that interlinked Mexico City and Santa Fe. Before that, it was one of the most significant ancestral routes of exchange and migration.

The mural contracts and expands time, paying homage to all relatives who have sojourned this and other routes, including those who once exchanged salt, shells, and chocolate across vast distances before European contact. It also conjures another, even deeper, past — the earliest recorded presence of Indigenous peoples in the Americas. Fossilized footprints from over 23,000 years ago were found in the Tularosa Basin at White Sands National Park, along with ancient grass seeds, marking yet another history of travel. The artist, who has collaborated with the National Park Service on the site, believes the profound layers of ancestral presence and connection to the current moment have gone untold in writings about the discovery.

Finally, *long has the light wandered to lay itself upon you* thrusts viewers into yet another timescape, the exodus of the Tiwa and Piro peoples southward after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. These routes, the artist calls, the “trails beneath the trail, the roads beneath the road.” The overlapping timelines, he says, “are part of an interbeing of spiritual identity and mystical relationship to place.”



Diego Medina

(Piro-Manso-Tiwa)



Bio:

Diego Medina is a member of the Piro-Manso-Tiwa tribe, an artist, poet, historian, and educator whose family is one of the original Native families from the historic Mesquite district in downtown Las Cruces. As an artist, Diego's work illustrates intricate metaphors that combine cultural knowledge and ancestral wisdom with fantasy and poetics. Diego also creates cartographical and poetic fantasy illustrations that bring together ecological and cosmological knowledge within the process of prayer. For Diego, prayer is the finest art because it informs our conscious will, our expressions of love, connects us with sacred ancestral wisdom, and strengthens our spiritual kinship. In addition to creating art, Diego has a deep passion for archival research and borderlands Indigenous history and currently serves as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Piro-Manso-Tiwa tribe.

[Instagram@daydreamboy](#)



Margarita Paz-Pedro
(Laguna/Santa Clara)

Mano a Mano

2021, ceramic plates, cups, bowl, and shards decorated with photo transfers



Mano a Mano

The ancient technology of shaping and firing clay is constantly reinterpreted and reimagined. From traditional Pueblo potters to contemporary ceramic artists, New Mexican earthenware carries the stories of its makers, and personal and collective ways of knowing.

In *Mano a Mano*, Margarita Paz-Pedro (Laguna/Santa Clara Pueblos) photo transfers images of indigenous peoples' hands onto ceramic cups, each inspired by designs found at Chaco Canyon, an Ancestral Puebloan site located in northwestern New Mexico. "Pueblo pottery is a deep and rich artform and that's not what I do," says Paz-Pedro, who distinguishes between traditional Pueblo pottery and her own practice of incorporating global materials and techniques. Paz-Pedro, who trained in Colorado and France, uses porcelain, which was invented in China during the Shang dynasty (1600–1046 B.C.E.) and refined in Europe in the 18th century.

As a comment on history, survival, labor, and connectivity, *Mano a Mano* invites the viewer to consider the Indigenous presence — and labor — that has shaped the region. To source the imagery, Paz-Pedro found historical photographs of indigenous women grinding corn and weaving baskets, and she combined these with contemporary photographs of her daughter and husband's grandfather.



Margarita Paz-Pedro

(Laguna/Santa Clara)



Bio:

"I draw my ideas from how time, place, life and culture intersect with my Mexican-American, Laguna Pueblo and Santa Clara Pueblo background within New Mexico."

Born in Albuquerque, raised in Las Cruces and with family in Laguna Pueblo, Margarita Paz-Pedro has ties across the state. She is a ceramic artist, teacher, organizer and muralist. She received her BFA with an emphasis in Ceramics in 2003 from the University of Colorado-Boulder, followed by a Masters in Art Education in 2008 from the University of New Mexico. In 2006, she completed a five-month apprenticeship in Paris, France with internationally known ceramicist Madame Fance Franck. In 2009, she traveled to Japan for a ceramics exploration trip as a part of an Arita Porcelain class. In early 2020, she was an Artist in Residence at Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe for a month.

www.pazpedro.com

Jeanna Penn



Two Degrees East, Three Degrees West

2022, watercolor, acrylic, marker, oil paint marker, inkjet prints on mounted watercolor paper



Two Degrees East, Three Degrees West

Can our divergent histories lead us to understand place differently? Jeanna Penn's large-scale collages are made with archival photographs of Albuquerque's Black community that date from the 1940s through 1960s, a period when the city held a small but notable Black population. Penn explores

four sites of Black geography in Albuquerque: Bailey House, Ted Davis Texaco, Ideal Hotel, and Winona Day Nursery. Penn's collages speak of Albuquerque's oft-neglected history of Black presence and the will to create community, despite the constraints of gentrification, urban planning, and zoning.



Jeanna Penn



Bio:

Jeanna Penn is a contemporary artist who lives and works between Oakland and Los Angeles, California. She has been creating art for over twenty-five years in various forms including mixed media collage, soft sculpture, photography, zines and documentary film. Much of Jeanna's work is centered around recontextualizing found imagery and documenting material histories. She received her BA in African American Studies from Morgan State University and continued graduate work in African History at Howard University and Historical Documentary Filmmaking at George Washington University. Jeanna also supports other artists' work by curating art exhibitions, designing and producing public murals, and working as an arts manager. Along with her partner/husband, Stash Maleski, she runs ICU Art, a commercial mural art company. With ICU Art they are able to fulfill their personal mission of creating opportunities for artists so they can support themselves and their families without having to sacrifice their artistic practices. Jeanna's work has been shown at the Arts Guild of Sonoma (California); The Art Cave in Santa Cruz (California); The Barret Art Center (New York); Eyelevel Centre (Nova Scotia). In 2020 she was published in Create Magazine.

www.jeannapennart.com

Marlena Robbins

(Dine)



Welcome to Aztlan: A Convergence of Protest Culture

2022, acrylic on canvas and beads

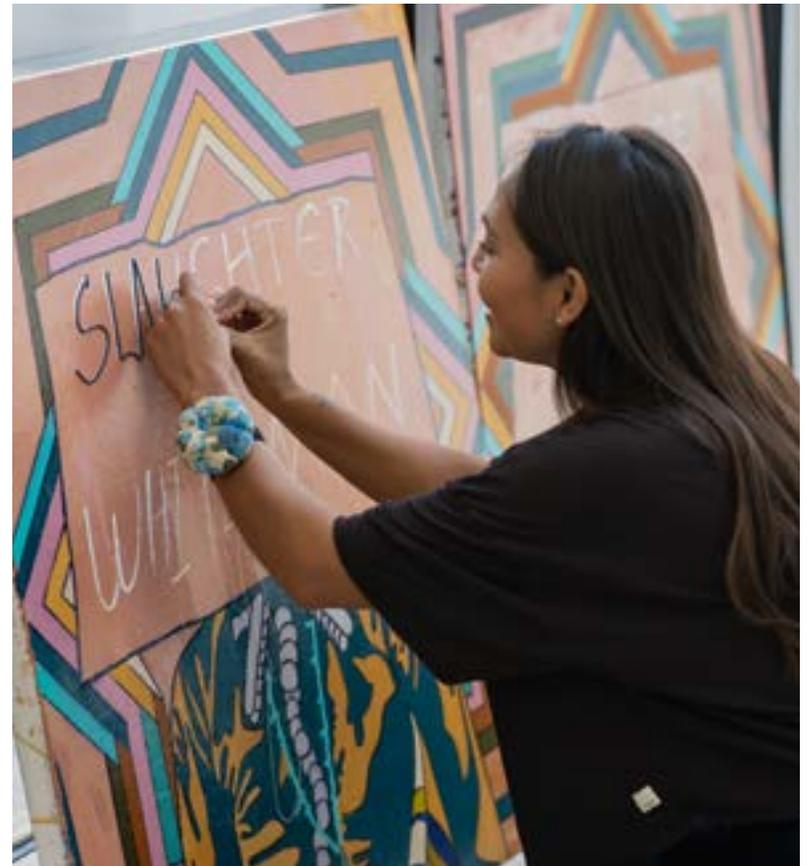


Welcome to Aztlan: A Convergence of Protest Culture

How is the memory of conflict honored and the unthinkable remembered? In *Welcome to Aztlan: A Convergence of Protest Culture*, artist Marlena Robbins (Diné) references details from Bob Fitch's photographs of the 1974 Farmington Protests to make paintings on canvas and then invites members of the community to bead these canvases as an act of remembering. In so doing, Robbins invites viewers to think of history as a type of labor, a craft needing to be worked. As community members bead the canvas, Robbins shares her knowledge of beadwork and history with them. This is how the story is passed from one person to another. Like the act of remembering history, the artwork is never complete and stands as a call for others to pick up the unfinished work of the past.

The 1974 Farmington Protests, in response to the murder of three Navajos by white teenagers, were a moment of expanded consciousness for the Navajo people, marking yet another transition in their relationship with the settler communities that surround them. At a time when the American Indian Movement was at its height, Farmington's history of anti-Indigenous violence, intimidation, and subjugation was publicly challenged.

"Protesting is a multi-generational expansion of collective consciousness where our youth are learning from our elders and our elders are learning from our youth and everyone in between," says Robbins. "They're all in support of one collective decision. It's very communal in nature."



Marlena Robbins

(Dine)



Bio:

Marlena Robbins is a Diné visual artist whose artwork takes a critical view of social, political and cultural issues, referencing Diné history and culture. Her work explores the varying relationships between Diné ways of knowing and the art of wellbeing. She received a Masters Degree in Indigenous Rights and Social Justice from Arizona State University where her thesis, *Art as a Spiritual Expression for Indigenous Wellbeing*, focused on healing and coping from trauma by exploring the western and mainstream societal influences that have led to the loss of cultural identity and to observe programs and development principles and practices that may serve as paradigms for Indigenous communities to re-establish a resilient connection to healing.

www.marlenarobbinsart.com



Leo Vicenti
(Jicarilla Apache)

"Tsi gha taa ye" (You can almost see through it)

2022, collodion prints on glas



“Tsi gha taa ye” (You can almost see through it)

“Tsi gha taa ye” (You can almost see through it) by Leo Vicenti (Jicarilla Apache) is a collection of ambrotypes on glass plates that tell the story of culturally modified trees by the Jicarilla Apache in northern New Mexico. To help them survive forced removal from New Mexico’s northeastern plains by the US Army, the Jicarilla Apache harvested cambium, a thin and edible layer between the bark and wood of ponderosa pine trees from the mid-1800s onward. The trees still bear those marks today, reflecting long standing forms of mutualism with the land, then and now.

Photography has been a mixed technology for Indigenous people. It has, to some, become an invaluable resource that shows how Indigenous people dressed and lived in the 19th and 20th centuries. But these same photographs were often staged and edited to portray Native Americans as primitive and exotic, advancing a narrative that their cultures were dying. Such visual culture not only attempted to chronicle this perceived demise, but also justify the mass displacement of Native Americans for white settlement. Vicenti puts the technology of photography in the service of a more complete history of the Jicarilla Apache using an indigenous voice and performing a kind of alchemy in the process.

“Through appropriation, I use this Western medium to focus on the living artifacts that hide in plain sight but tell a story which is documented outside of colonial frameworks,” says Vicenti. The photographs of trees testify to the Jicarilla Apache’s historic knowledge and relationship to the land. This history is held in the 561 culturally modified trees found around the Picuris Mountains, in northern New Mexico.

Leo Vicenti

(Jicarilla Apache)



Bio:

"In Jicarilla we are left with no word for art, only creating beauty, which can be applied to everything we know as both being art and not being art." -Felipe Ortega

Leo Vicenti is an enrolled member of the Jicarilla Apache Nation. He identifies creatively as a human, an artist, educator and visual communication designer, which informs his making. "I frequently work in collections focusing on content related to Native American cultures," he writes. "This focus builds my understanding of these communities and allows me to respond creatively; whether it is creating an exhibit, or a project that works in an arts context." Vicenti received his Master of Fine Arts from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 2020, where his research focused in visual communication design. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Communication Design at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He was born and raised in New Mexico where he maintains connection to the Jicarilla Apache culture and homelands.

www.lvicenti.com