

OOLONG GALLERY

William Leavitt – Raul Guerrero

Paintings – Drawings – Graphics

February 21 – March 21, 2026

Oolong Gallery

6030 La Flecha Rancho Santa Fe CA 92067

Tuesday–Saturday 11–5pm appointments best

Opening Reception Saturday 02/21 6–8pm

Please join us at Oolong Gallery for the historic second duo show between William Leavitt and Raul Guerrero since "Time and Place" (Marc Selwyn Fine Art LA, 2021).

Leavitt and Guerrero first crossed paths in Los Angeles during the 1970s. Leavitt, a native of Washington D.C., graduated from Claremont Graduate Center in 1971 and Guerrero, born and raised just miles from the Mexican border in National City, completed his studies at Chouinard in 1970 (precursor to CalArts). Both artists were heirs to a generation of art makers who mined the regional environment in the formulation of their images. The artists share a willingness to forego pictorial logic in exchange for the disorienting quality of Surrealism in the tradition of Magritte. Additionally both came of age professionally when the banner of conceptual art sanctioned the use of multiple mediums within the artist's practice.

William Leavitt has devoted the bulk of his fifty year career to deciphering the social indicators innate to the landscape and aesthetics of Southern California. From domestic interiors to decommissioned power stations to SoCal's ubiquitous Joshua Trees, Leavitt captures the ache of a distinctly urban isolation in conversation with compelling natural beauty. In addition to the painting and drawing featured in this exhibition, Leavitt, a true artworld hybrid, is revered for his work as a draughtsman, designer, installation artist, sculptor, filmmaker and playwright. Though the artist has frequently utilized the innate theatricality of a gallery setting - "My early installations were like fragments of stage sets...sort of like sculptures where I used trees and lights and sound."

For the past five decades, Raul Guerrero has generated an extraordinarily eloquent variety of artwork inclusive of photography, installation, video, sculpture and most significantly, painting. Leavitt's selections span a twenty-five year period, from 1994 through 2020. Each reflects

Guerrero's fever dream experience of growing up in a Eurocentric culture, biologically Mexican yet technically American. Utilizing a specific set of formal parameters and a free-wheeling technicolor palette, Guerrero conjures the contradictions of memory in present tense. Tlatilco figurines balance atop a French perfume bottle while an enigmatic stick figure – Madame X of the title – looks on. In a mythic desert panorama, the artist situates Constantin Brancusi's 'Sleeping Muse' in the foreground alongside a trio of indigenous animal species. A cross-cultural mashup is articulated in the 'close quarters' of the four object/animals and in the bravura physicality of the paint application. In his forcefully rendered pop culture and fine art objects, Guerrero continues his revelatory examination of identity.

— Marc Selwyn Gallery from their first duo show "Time and Place" (LA 2021); audio by William Leavitt [here](#)

— David Kordansky Gallery exhibition link / artist talk video (NY 2024) on Raul Guerrero [here](#)



William Leavitt (b. 1941) *Self Portrait As An Analog Synthesizer*, 2025 Acrylic on linen 24 x 30 in

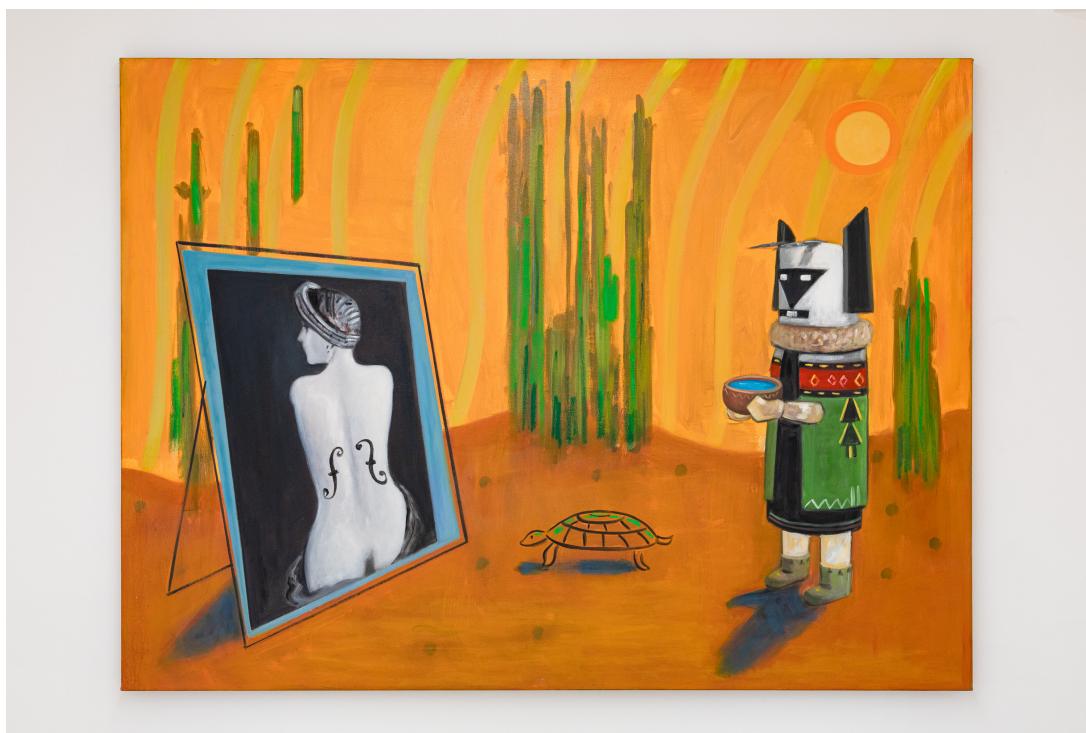
Circuit Figures History

"In 2019 I painted two standing figures that were composed of electronic circuits and wiring. In 2023 I painted 12 small Cyborg portraits that were hung on three panels of chain link fence. Using these paintings as a starting point I painted five torsos that were composed of electronic circuit boards in 2024. This series of paintings reflect my interest in science fiction and my previous building of an electronic music synthesizer." —William Leavitt

From *Gothic Electronica* the recent concurrent exhibition between Sebastian Gladstone and Leavitt's gallery Marc Selwyn Fine Art (Fall 2024):

"Leavitt has spent his career as an artist in Southern California, drawing endless inspiration from the architecture and mass media culture of Hollywood. By the time Leavitt began his artistic practice, Pop Art and Minimalism had begun to run their course. As an important figure in the first generation of California conceptual art, Leavitt was able to use these prior movements to synthesize his personal experiences and impressions of the California landscape. A writer and filmmaker himself, Leavitt's works have always been rooted in narrative storytelling and intrinsically linked to theater, film, and the media culture of Los Angeles.

Gothic Electornica provides a comprehensive look through Leavitt's career, beginning with photographs from the 1970s and running up to a series of recent science fiction-inspired cyborg paintings which seem to foreshadow the rapid merging of human beings, robotics, and high-tech intelligence. Since many of his paintings and photographs were initially utilized as stage props and settings, Leavitt's formal gallery shows have often conflated fine art and theatrical installations. Uncanny science fiction narratives, melodrama, and cinematic moments that seem familiar, yet out of place, run through Leavitt's entire oeuvre."



Raul Guerrero (b. 1945) *The Yei Bi Chei*, 2015 Oil and oil stick on canvas 56 x 76 in | 142.2 x 193 cm

From FRIEZE Magazine:

Duchamp in the Desert: the Surrealist Synthesis of Raul Guerrero (Jennifer S. Li, Winter 2020)

"When Raul Guerrero was growing up in Southern California in the 1940s and '50s, the US–Mexico border was more porous than it is today, and he would often drive with his family across the Sonoran Desert – a habit the artist continued into adulthood. The septuagenarian's latest body of work, 'Sonoran Desert: Flora, Fauna, Artifacts', comprises surrealist paintings that, in places, evoke the crisp sure-handedness of René Magritte and, in others, the dreamlike filigree of Leonora Carrington. It unfolds through the loose construct of a road trip, albeit a non-linear journey that explores the artist's multivalent Mexican–American identity and disparate artistic and cultural influences. On weekly childhood visits to Tijuana, Guerrero was exposed to both Mexican folk handicrafts and cheap marketplace kitsch. At home in Southern California, there were Hollywood movies, surf culture, low riders and beatniks, as well as the art of John Baldessari and Ed Ruscha. In the 1970s, he was schooled in the mostly white, Eurocentric tradition at Chouinard Art Institute (now CalArts). *A Desert Road* (all works 2019) envisages Guerrero's cultural heritage and art-school pedigree as a roadside duel between a traditional Yei Bi Chei, the spirit god of the Navajo nation, and a classical nude. The Yei Bi Chei wears a grimacing wolf mask as he shakes a gourd rattle at the languorous Venus. Like the trail of ants marching across the bottom of the canvas, Guerrero shuttles between seemingly opposing aspects of his experience, synthesizing European and Indigenous, Mexican and American, traditional and avant-garde influences."

Since the late 1960s, **William Leavitt** (b.1941, Washington D.C.) was the subject of a retrospective curated by Anne Goldstein and Bennett Simpson at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 2011. His work is included in numerous private and public collections including the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Orange County Museum of Art; San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art; and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. He has been the recipient of an NEA Fellowship, J. Paul Getty Fellowship, J. Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and a United States Artist Fellowship. [CV](#)

For over four decades, **Raul Guerrero** (b. 1945, Brawley, California) has made work informed by his experiences navigating cultures as an American of Mexican ancestry in Southern California. In his paintings, photographs, video, and performance works, Guerrero utilizes language and cultural signifiers to examine notions of place as a way to understand personal concepts of self. An aspect of his work depicts—and critiques—colonial narratives in the Americas such as the settlement of the Great Plains, the history of Latin America, and imposed notions of the American “West.” With compositions fusing Mexican, American, and European visual traditions, he incorporates influences ranging from the readymades of Marcel Duchamp to conceptually-oriented practices associated with a preceding generation of California artists (including John Baldessari and Ed Ruscha) who emerged from Guerrero's alma mater, the Chouinard Art Institute. A long-time exhibiting artist on the West Coast, Guerrero reflects an intellectually rigorous approach suffused with humor and a deep engagement with legacies of visual art from Southern California and the Southwest.

Raul Guerrero is currently the subject of a solo exhibition at Plataforma in Guadalajara, Mexico, on view through January 11, 2026. Other solo exhibitions of his work have taken place at David Kordansky Gallery, New York (2024); Ortuzar Projects, New York (2018); Air de Paris (project space), Romainville, France (2014); Athenaeum Music and Arts Library, San Diego, California (2001, 2007, and 2013); CUE Art Foundation, New York (2010); Long Beach Museum of Art, California (1977); Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (1989); and San Francisco Art Institute, California (1977). Recent group exhibitions include 50 Paintings, Milwaukee Art Museum (2023); California Biennial 2022: Pacific Gold at the Orange County Museum of Art, Costa Mesa, California (2022–2023), and A Universal History of Infamy, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2017–2018). He was the recipient of an NEA Photography Fellowship (1979), the San Diego Art Prize (2006), and the Guggenheim Fellowship (2025). Guerrero lives and works in San Diego. [CV](#)

